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Labor approves union with Gesher, Meimad

By DANNA HARMAN

The Labor Party central committee yesterday approved the union with Gesher and Meimad, and party leader Ehud Barak finally, and formally, launched his new umbrella movement, One Israel.



Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak (Hasan Ousef/Israel Sun)

Under the agreements worked out with the two parties, Meimad will get one ministerial position, to be held by a non-MK, and two Knesset seats (Nos. 17 and 33), while Gesher will get three seats (3, 18, and 29) and a senior ministerial position for its leader, David Levy.

While most of the 700-odd committee members present at Kibbutz Shefayim waved their blue cards over their heads when asked if they were for the mergers, there were at least two dozen vocal opponents. Leading the dissenters were MKs Effi Ohry, Eitan Cabel, and Eli Dayan who each, in turn, took the stage to rail against the plan to bring in outsiders and to bemoan their fortune, which is to be moved down the party list to make room for the newcomers.

The three also spearheaded an effort in which 12,000 discontented Labor members distributed flyers urging their colleagues to vote against the agreements.

"I understand the frustration of those colleagues whose places are being changed," said Barak in his speech, "but this is an action taken in order for us to ensure our victory. And a victory is definitely needed in this country, in which everything is falling apart."

Former prime minister Shimon Peres, speaking after Barak, asked the discontented if they wanted to take the responsibility for a loss on May 17. "We need every vote, every single one. We lost the last elections because of a third of a percent, and we need to make absolutely sure never to let that happen again," said Peres.

Oshaya - who will be moved from No. 26 to No. 30 - wanted to know why, after having worked so hard for the party in the Knesset, he was being replaced by "mercenaries."

"Not only is this move not going to help us," he said. "It will hurt. People will think we need to buy support for ourselves."

Dayan, who will be bumped from No. 31 to No. 36, demanded to know why Labor is paying such a high price when it is "clear to all that neither Meimad nor Gesher have anywhere else to go." Dayan called the negotiations a "big failure, that will affect any further negotiations we go into in the future."

Unlike the fiasco at the party primaries, however, when discontented MK Adisu Messele and candidate Nadia Hiliu got up and berated the party and Barak, yesterday's complaints were all prefaced with a clear statement of loyalty to Labor and its leader. "I know Barak. I admire him, and I will continue to fully support him. I just think we are making a big mistake," said Oshaya.

MK Haim Ramon, the force behind the negotiations with Gesher, tried to calm the passions of the crowd, arguing that "creating One Israel has a price. We all knew there would be a price, and that it would hurt, but we all will get into the Knesset together because of One Israel."

At the end of the afternoon, perhaps in the spirit of Meimad, a pleased Barak blessed the union with a *Shehehiyanu*, and called it a day.

Nothing very new under Labor's sun

ANALYSIS

It could be frightening to find out just how many top laborites today recall a faction named Ha'oved Hadati, and, if so, that they can say about its long association with their party. More realistically, it would be interesting to hear their evaluation of the faction's contribution over the decades of Labor's electoral successes.

Ha'oved Hadati - for those who might not remember - was first led by the controversial and sharp-tongued Prof. Yeshayahu Leibowitz. He was followed at the helm by Menachem Hacohen, who served as a Labor MK and as the faction's rabbi (honest, such an idea did exist).

The faction's raison d'être was to give an alliance between moderate religious Zionists and the Labor party. The idea was that progressive religious types would be encouraged by the existence of the faction cast their ballots for Labor, rather

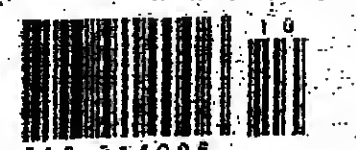
than for any of the possible alternatives, especially the National Religious Party.

By now it should all sound familiar. Ha'oved Hadati may have faded, but it did not depart without issue. Meimad is its direct descendant, and Labor envisions precisely the same role for it as it did for its ideological ancestor. It is supposed to take in to Labor's turf all those votes at the leftward fringes of the national-religious milieu.

All of which goes to prove, yet again, that there really is nothing very new under Labor's sun. A Meimad of sorts existed in elections past, albeit by another name, and with somewhat different nuances and accommodations. But the undeniable fact is that Labor always had a sprinkling of religious fellow travelers, most of whom sported crocheted kippot.

The odds are that in recent years plenty of them were in one way or another associated with Meimad, although its immediate roots are in the NRP. These very same people probably also voted for Labor in 1996 as well, without the Ha'oved Hadati and without Meimad. In all likelihood, the same segment of the religious electorate will do so in this campaign as well, and would have done so regardless of the fact that Rabbi Michael Melchior would be given a Knesset seat and Avi Ravitzky promised a portfolio in a possible future Labor-led government.

HABAT	BEGINS	ENDS
Jerusalem	5:32 p.m.	6:15 p.m.
Tel Aviv	5:20 p.m.	6:17 p.m.
Ramat Gan	5:11 p.m.	6:16 p.m.
Bnei Brak	5:18 p.m.	6:17 p.m.
Netanya	5:20 p.m.	6:17 p.m.



See NEWS, Page 2

Abdullah reshuffles cabinet

By DANNA HARMAN

Jordan's King Abdullah II yesterday telephoned Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to inform him of the appointment of Abdul-Raouf Rawabdeh as his new prime minister.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said that Abdullah also thanked Netanyahu for his visit earlier this week, and that the two had agreed Rawabdeh would work with Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon in dealing with all bilateral issues. A letter congratulating Rawabdeh has been prepared and is to be sent out soon, Netanyahu spokesman Aviv Bushinsky said last night.

Abdullah's decision to replace prime minister Fayez Tarawneh with Rawabdeh, a veteran local politician who supported the peace deal with Israel, was his first major executive step since succeeding his father, King Hussein, who died February 7.

News agencies in Amman reported that Abdullah asked Rawabdeh, a 60-year-old member of parliament and former deputy prime minister, to take over from Tarawneh, 51, and form a new government.

He also named former prime minister Abdul-Karim Kabariti, whose 1996-97 government implemented tough economic changes and displaced Jordan from former ally Iraq, as chief of Jordan's royal court.

After swearing in Rawabdeh and his 22 cabinet colleagues, including three deputy premiers, Abdullah urged them to consolidate ties with Israel and to work for a "transparent" government, a freer press, and wider democracy.

"Jordan is in the throes of a new and promising era," Abdullah said in a letter to Rawabdeh, outlining



Jordan's King Abdullah II (right) welcomes new Prime Minister Abdul-Raouf Rawabdeh to the royal palace in Amman yesterday. (AP)

his policy guidelines.

In his 16-page letter, Abdullah instructed him to consolidate Jordan's ties with the Palestinians

and Israel under the 1994 peace treaty signed by his father. "Peace is a strategic option" for Jordan, he said.

The 37-year-old monarch said he will campaign for a regional settlement that will include peace accords between Israel and its Arab

neighbors, namely Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians.

See ABDULLAH, Page 12

First funerals held in Beersheba's public, secular cemetery

By HAIM SHAPIRO

As leaders of a wide spectrum of non-Orthodox movements were congratulating each other on the fact that the first secular burial in a public cemetery took place yesterday, leaders of the Conservative and Reform movements were already surmising that they might have to have separate plots within the cemetery.

The funeral was that of Ya'acov and Hanna Ravervi, who were buried in plain wooden coffins in the Beersheba burial ground acquired by Menucha Nehona, an organization that aims to provide non-Orthodox alternatives for burial.

The two, who died within two weeks of each other, had both donated their bodies to science and were only now interred, after the new cemetery became available. In a short message, their grandson, Yoni Goldman, said it was odd to deliver a eulogy two years after the death of his grandparents.

The ceremony, without prayers, was conducted by Prof. Boaz Morav, who read a poem by Yehuda Amichai following the lowering of Hanna Ravervi's coffin and then a poem by Natan Alterman after her husband's coffin was placed in the ground in the same plot, above hers.

See BURIAL, Page 2



The coffin of Ya'acov Ravervi is lowered into his grave in Beersheba's new secular cemetery yesterday. (Yael Somekh/Israel Sun)

My evening with Monica

By CALEY BEN-DAVID

"People didn't realize that behind the name Monica Lewinsky there was a person." They do now, after we got to hear comments like that from her in the television interview aired last night on Channel 1, a simultaneous broadcast of her discussion with Britain's Channel 4 reporter Jon Snow.

And what kind of person did we finally get to see? Not an insipid Beverly Hills princess, sex-crazed psychotic stalker, or naive little lamb. The Monica Lewinsky we saw last night is an

articulate, self-assured, and remarkably self-involved young woman who seems to have weathered the ordeal the past year better than Bill Clinton.

Kenneth Starr, or, for that matter, most of the American people.

See MONICA, Page 6

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NEWS

in brief

Shoval meets with GOP hopeful Bush

Ambassador Zalman Shoval met yesterday in Austin with Texas governor and possible GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush. An embassy official said that during the one-hour meeting Shoval updated Bush on the peace process. The two also discussed joint American-Israeli efforts to neutralize the dangers of regional missile proliferation. Shoval had met earlier in the day with Texas' secretary of state, Elton Bower, to discuss economic matters. *Hillel Kuttler*

Man questioned in Sharon-Ben-Gal case

Police yesterday questioned Russian businessman Vladimir Gozinsky about a trip by Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, and retired general Avigdor Ben-Gal to Russia in 1997 when Sharon was national infrastructure minister. Gozinsky, who also has Israeli citizenship, was questioned about the trip made by Sharon which was aimed at discussing the possibility of importing natural gas. Police are investigating suspicions that Ben-Gal was brought along as a businessman who could have profited from the deal, in exchange for him agreeing to change his testimony in a libel suit regarding Sharon's role in the Lebanon war. Gozinsky had hosted the delegation. Police questioned Sharon for eight hours on Wednesday. *Ilim*

Promotion of Galili on hold

Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz has delayed promoting Brig.-Gen. Nir Galili to the rank of major-general, pending the High Court of Justice's ruling on a petition by a former female soldier who has accused him of rape. The IDF Spokesman yesterday issued a statement saying there is no basis to the claim that Galili raped the soldier, but that Mofaz, out of respect for the High Court, decided to delay the promotion, which should have taken effect today. *Arieh O'Sullivan*

Bentsur shores up civil cooperation with Turkey

Eytan Bentsur, director-general of the Foreign Ministry, returned yesterday from a brief visit to Ankara, where he met with his Turkish counterpart and with Turkey's President Ismail Cem. The talks focused on a need for increased cooperation in the civil sector. Annual trade between the countries stands at \$800 million, with another \$400m. in tourism. It was decided to set up a \$600m. dollar fund for scientific research. The countries reiterated that their relations are not directed against any other country, and that neither would involve the other in their respective regional conflicts. *Danna Haman*

NEW

Continued from Page 1

Will the fact that Meimad got a couple of slots on the Knesset list as payment for its entry into the One Israel bloc improve Ehud Barak's prospects to win the premiership or significantly increase Labor's Knesset representation? The value of Meimad's support will no doubt be the subject of political debate and, learned academic deliberation after polling day. It will be then that Labor-backbenchers will again raise the question of whether the price exacted by Melchior and Ravitzky was worth it.

They will also ask the same question about David Levy's Geshet. Like Meimad, it, too, has no chance of crossing the Knesset threshold on its own. Whether either of these recruits to Barak's banner will spark a political revolution depends on all that

since the 1970s. In all, he only stood tough on securing Knesset slots for his cronies.

The fact is that Levy was too smart to press his usual points. This time he quit while he was ahead. He is coming away with a promised portfolio and three Knesset seats, which is more than he could wrangle out of Benjamin Netanyahu last fall and which is why he then swiftly opted for Barak. His faction's pitiful showing in November's local elections and his on-again off-again assignment with Netanyahu did not augment his political desirability. But those Laborites who will be pushed down their own list from slots earned in gruelling primaries dare not raise too loud a squawk lest they be accused of impeding Barak's prime ministerial drive.

Nevertheless, MK Eli Ben-Menahem did inquire yesterday: "Why—if Levy and Ravitzky were so convinced that Barak's sal-

Israeli, German police reports on Kurd deaths contradictory – German official

A German state prosecutor said yesterday in Berlin there were contradictions between Israeli and German police reports of how four Kurds were killed as they tried to storm the Israeli consulate in Berlin.

General state prosecutor Hansjuergen Karge said in view of the contradictions, it could not yet be established whether the two Israeli guards outside the building had only opened fire in self-defense as they have said.

Foreign Ministry officials said in response: "we are convinced that these

points will be clarified."

The incident was triggered last month by the capture of Kurdish separatist leader Abdullah Ocalan by Turkey. Kurds believe Israeli agents aided Turkey in the arrest, a charge Israel has denied.

Up to 100 Kurds tried to storm the consulate, located in a quiet Berlin suburb, as part of a wave of protests across Germany, which has a substantial Kurdish community.

Karge said German police had reported that the Israeli guards, who returned to Israel shortly after the shooting, had opened

fire on the crowd outside the building. He also said two of the four victims had been shot in the head.

Israel has said the guards only shot in the air and at the legs of Kurds trying to storm the building.

The ministry officials said that Israel's investigation has shown that the guards had acted according to regulations, in defending themselves, the Israeli and German employees at the consulate against violence.

Karge, who was speaking before the legal committee of Berlin's parliament, said the

violent nature of the protest meant self-defense must have played some role.

"But prosecutors cannot definitively say whether this was true for the whole sequence of events," he said.

He noted there was no question of the two guards being charged because they enjoyed diplomatic immunity.

Three of the dead Kurds were repatriated to Turkey for burial last Friday. A fourth protester died of gun wounds in hospital on Saturday.

(Reuters, Itim)

IAF's \$84m. F-15I put to battle in Lebanon

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

The IAF's \$84 million F-15I fighter jet had its first taste of battle, attacking Hizbullah targets on the Soujoud ridge with precision weapons, the latest edition of *Air Force Magazine* reported.

The strategic fighter, known in Hebrew as the Ram (thunder) reportedly made the strike on January 11. On that day the IDF announced it had struck at Hizbullah targets and scored accurate hits. Reports from Lebanon then said that the warplanes fired at least 14 missiles in seven sorties.

According to the magazine, the attack was led by a Maj. Haggai, deputy squadron commander of the *Parishim* (hammers) squadron. The lead navigator, Capt. Noam, described the attack.

"It was not a complicated attack. The sortie lasted 40 minutes. We had good visibility and there were no problems with the weather. After we attacked the target with precision guided weapons we saw that we had very good hits."

"For me it was my first operational attack at night," Capt. Noam said. "I had flown in an F-15 squadron, but the Ram has capabilities and advanced weapons systems that other jets don't have. I can certainly say it was an experience."

A few days after that first attack, the F-15Is were used to perform another attack in Lebanon.

Israel began receiving the first of its 25 F-15Is last January at a rate of about two a month. The IAF said the squadron started to be operational last June and that this attack in Lebanon marks its first acknowledged battle test.

The IAF purchased the advanced F-15I to enhance its over-the-horizon capability.



Overcome by tear gas

A Palestinian woman is carried away yesterday near the village of Halhoul, after being overcome by tear gas fired by the IDF to disperse protesters. According to the IDF, about 50 Palestinians had tried to cut down street lights around the perimeter of the Karmel Tzur settlement. There were no reported damages or injuries.

(Text: Margot Dudkevitch; Photo: AP)

Palestinians hand over 3 Israeli crime suspects

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Palestinian police in Tulkarm yesterday detained three Israelis suspected of trying to hold up an armored van with two Palestinian accomplices.

Later the Israelis were handed over to the District Coordinating Office, the IDF spokesman said.

According to Palestinian officials, the Israelis were armed and were trying to commit a robbery but at this stage it is not clear what

Spokesman Rafi Yafeh said that the Israeli suspects were being questioned at the Kadum police station, and that they would be brought to Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court this morning to extend their remand. Yafeh said that the suspects had been armed and had apparently planned to commit a robbery.

"It is not clear whether they planned to rob a bank or a post office or an armored van. They planned to commit a robbery but at this stage it is not clear what

Yafeh said.

Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of activities in the territories told *The Jerusalem Post* that according to regulations, Palestinian police cannot detain Israeli citizens in Area A, unless they are armed and in the course of committing a crime, in which case the Palestinians can detain them and immediately notify the DCO.

Tulkarm is in Area A. "The Palestinian police are not allowed to arrest or question

Israelis," Dror said.

Dror said there have been cases of Israelis being held by Palestinian police, sometimes due to misunderstandings about the regulations. But he added that there have been instances where Palestinians have arrested Israelis with the knowledge that it was against regulations.

He said "there have been many cases" where Palestinian police have arrested Israeli Arabs. In one case, an Israeli Arab arrested in Gaza was held for a month, he said.

BURIAL

Continued from Page 1

This procedure of using each plot for two burials is to become standard in all new Israeli cemeteries.

Earlier in the week, the cemetery was consecrated as a Jewish cemetery by Rabbi Gila Dror, spiritual leader of Beersheba's Conservative congregation. The cemetery is to

have two sections, a traditional one, where Jews are to be buried with a religious service chosen by the family, and a secular section, where secular burials are to be held, and non-Jews as well as Jews may be buried.

However, Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center, said yesterday that his movement would bury couples

together, even if one of the spouses was not Jewish, while Rabbi Ehud Bandel, president of Israel's Conservative movement, said that his movement would recognize as Jews those converted by Reform rabbis, but it would not be able to use a section in which non-Jews are also interred.

For Miriam Kunda, the national chairwoman of Mezuza Nehona, it is important that this is the first

cemetery in which anyone could have a secular funeral paid for by the National Insurance Institute. Until now, those present at the ceremony said that kibbutzim have charged up to NIS 14,000 for burial in their secular cemeteries.

Kunda stressed the importance of the help of the New Israel Fund, which has backed her organization. "The struggles are not over yet," she said, noting that such cities as

Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa, all slated to have alternative cemeteries, do not yet have them.

Speaking at the ceremony, Prof. Shimon Shetret, who had served as religious affairs minister when arrangements were being made for the new cemetery, said that if he had paid a political price for it, it was worth it.

Beersheba Mayor Ya'acov Terner said that the cemetery symbolizes the pluralistic nature of the city.

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In yesterday's Payis Hazak drawing, ticket number 763696 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 860827 won the car. Tickets 674971, 379360, 455940, 525288, 627747, 543567, 191179 and 586844 won NIS 5,000.

Tickets ending in 21527, 92659, 08718, 52123, 12623, 14607, 31914, 79835, 93832, 06745, 82640, 57272, 41292, 65307, 62389, 80701, 97548, 41752 and 53438 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 171, 686, 968, 145, 278 and 304 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 34, 97, 58 and 75 won 30 NIS. Tickets ending in 72 and 66 won 20 NIS. Tickets ending in 1 and 7 won NIS 10.

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Drive Carefully



MK Hanan Porat announces his break with the National Religious Party yesterday at a Knesset press conference. (Ariel Jerusalem/The Jerusalem Post)

Porat, Hendel set up Emunim faction, likely to join Tekuma

By NINA GILBERT and HEIDI GLEIT

The departure of MKs Hanan Porat and Zvi Hendel from the National Religious Party yesterday is expected to hasten efforts among parties on the far right to reach an agreement on a unified list next week.

Porat and Hendel announced they would likely be joining Tekuma, a religious settlement party. Tekuma is in advanced stages of negotiations with Herut and Moledet on forming a joint list. Since work on the joint platform is nearly complete, the main remaining item of business is to form the list, and Porat is expected to be offered as high as the No. 3 slot.

However, Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan has now reentered the fray, and has invited the three other parties to meet with him on Sunday in an attempt to reach unity.

Sources on the far right are skeptical whether Herut, Moledet, and Tekuma will find common ground with Eitan, and see his move more as a way to pressure Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for more concessions on rejoining the Likud list. Tsomet broke away from the Likud faction yesterday.

Herut said last night it was not sure it would be able to attend Eitan's meeting.

Netanyahu has offered Eitan the fifth Likud slot and promised him a ministry. However, Tsomet is also demanding another slot, either for Haim Dayan or another candidate.

Hendel and Porat formed a separate Knesset faction yesterday called Emunim.

Hendel said he was impelled to leave the NRP since it "had deviated from its path at a difficult time in the face of negotiations with the PLO. In a time like this, people must lead this struggle with all of their soul. The moment we felt that the party we are in cannot lead this struggle we decided to leave."

"Why negotiate with people, and I mean my neighbor Yasser Arafat, who don't intend for one moment to make peace," said Hendel, who lives in Moshav Ganai Tal in the Gush Katif area of the Gaza Strip.

Porat termed Hendel's decision to join him in leaving the NRP "a covenant between brothers." Porat had won an unrealistic 11th slot on the NRP slate and said he would leave politics unless Hendel, who came in seventh, joined him in moving to Tekuma. The two said they would work toward unity of the rightist camp, and would lead its religious component.

"The great test is ahead," said Porat. "There are those who have accepted the fact and say that the struggle is a lost cause. But we have not given up."

Porat, who joined the Knesset as a Tebiya MK in 1981 to lead the struggle against the evacuation of Yamit (and returned to the Knesset in 1988 with the NRP), said "there is again a danger" of the uprooting of settlements.

"We are talking about the heart of

the Land of Israel. And in Judea and Samaria, there are hundreds of thousands of people. In Yamit, it was seen by the public as an issue of giving a plot of land in return for peace, and the public was ecstatic. However, no one now believes we are headed for peace."

In an attempt at damage control, NRP ministers Yitzhak Levy and Shaul Yahalom told a news conference in Tel Aviv Porat and Hendel had left the NRP because they could not accept their poor showing in the party's primaries and this is not an indication of an ideological split.

The NRP is the only party that truly represents all religious Zionists, Levy said, adding he had invited Meimad and Tekuma to join it but was turned down.

Meanwhile, Levy unveiled the NRP's new slogan yesterday, *Kippa sruga berash ehad*, which may be translated as "Unity under a knitted kippa." Even if the two MKs decide to join the right-wing parties to form one party, Yahalom added, they would not represent religious interests, but would focus on a political viewpoint. "What is more important, unity in the religious-Zionist camp or that Hanan has a seat?" Levy asked.

If Hendel and Porat had left before the primaries, Levy and Yahalom said, their claims about leaving for ideological reasons would have more weight. Instead, their move is just an immoral attempt to evade the results of the primaries and steal campaign funds from the NRP.

Slomiansky: Hendel, Porat have left NRP for 'fringes'

By NINA GILBERT

Breakaway National Religious Party MKs Hanan Porat and Zvi Hendel have left for the right-wing fringes, where their ability to make an impact and protect the Land of Israel "is zero," NRP MK Nissan Slomiansky said yesterday.

"Moledet is already there. Instead of being a contributing element, they will only weaken the Likud and the NRP," he said. "They are therefore causing great damage" to the Land of Israel.

"That is the absurdity of the matter. They are saying in advance that they will be in the opposition—peri-

od," a visibly irritated Slomiansky said in an interview in his Knesset office after hearing Hendel and Porat had left the party.

He noted that if the two are not in the coalition, "they can't influence in any way." Even if Ze'ev (Benny) Begin, Moledet, and Tekuma unite and get 10 mandates, he said, and are 10 seats in the opposition, "what will that contribute? Nothing."

Slomiansky, who served as the long-time mayor of the settlement of Elkana in Samaria, was one of the founders of Gush Emunim in the 1970s along with Porat. After the signing of the Wye accords, he teamed up with Porat and Hendel

on a hard-line stance against the agreement.

Slomiansky says he believes the public will punish the two for splitting from the NRP. "The right-wing bloc that is being formed is another Tebiya, where Porat was once [an MK in 1982]. But the public wiped it out, since Tebiya toppled the government," he said.

If Porat and Hendel run at the head of Tekuma, a more religious, militant alternative to the NRP, he said, "we have had that, too. That was Morasha in the 1980s, where Porat and Druckman also were, and it only got a mandate and a half."

Slomiansky believes the NRP can still stand firm on the settlements

without Porat. He also accused Porat and Hendel of betraying the central committee members who voted them onto the list. No one is guaranteed a high slot, he said. "We don't have princes," in the NRP. "In order to get elected today, you must work and meet people and convince them."

According to Slomiansky, many people believe that Porat is more suited to being a leader in the national religious camp than a Knesset member. "But I don't see him today as a leader. A leader must be someone who operates honestly and straightforwardly. What he did today was set a goal and said all of the means are kosher."

Greetings from Deputy Minister of Education Moshe Peled, MK

I am pleased to send my wishes for a Happy Purim on this evening to the Women in Green Movement and to its leader, Ms. Nadia Matar.

The People of Israel is blessed by you as a group which leads one of the strongest public interest groups in the State of Israel.

The heroism of the Jewish woman has existed from the time of the prophetess Deborah, from Yael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, and Hannah the mother of sons, throughout all the generations to this very day and this evening of Women in Green. Today, on this evening, when the joy of the Purim Holiday is mingled with the profound grief of our People as a whole for our dead whom we have just buried, we are in need of your heroism and steadfastness which you have demonstrated from the time you first began to be active, to this very day.

The unique conception of Judaism, together with the concepts and values of all humanity in their entirety, also encompasses the concept of the struggle, heroism, and determination of the Women in Green Movement.

The selection of the People of Israel to be the "treasured possession" among all the peoples, and our being the Chosen People, obligates us, before any other commitment, to preserve the values of the People of Israel, the Torah of Israel, and the Land of Israel.

For thousands of years our People has borne the great mission imposed upon us by Divine Providence. The Children of Israel have shed much light in the dark places of the world. We have built the paths of truth and morality for all the people of the world, and the mission is still applicable today.

It is not the Oslo Accords that will bring us the peace we so desire. Only fraternal love, help extended to one another, and the understanding of that which separates us, shall give our People the physical and moral strength for the struggle to protect the Land of Israel, and the People who dwell within it.

The horrendous frustration and pain of recent days unite us, the entire Jewish People, with the bereaved families in their terrible loss; we do not have the words to console them.

The secret of the eternal existence of the People of Israel lies in the power of its ability to overcome difficulties, a power that remains the unique possession of Israel, as a treasured People and a holy nation.

The Women in Green Movement is a sign to the peoples of the world that we possess the spiritual and physical stamina necessary to preserve and maintain the eternity of our People and its Torah.

With my blessings for a Happy Holiday,

Moshe Peled

* The above is a representative letter of greeting which Government Ministers and Members of the Knesset sent to WOMEN IN GREEN on the occasion of their annual Purim Masquerade Dinner Party.

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Elections

ELECTIONS

notebook

Deri tours Mahaneh Yehuda

Shas head Aryeh Deri stopped short of the unequivocal support for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed earlier this week by David Yosef, son of Shas spiritual leader Ovadia Yosef, but he did say that the Shas-Netanyahu combination is "apparently a good formula." Deri toured Jerusalem's Mahaneh Yehuda market yesterday, where he was met with signs of strong support and cries of "Bibi," "Aryeh," and "Shas." Deri launched the Shas campaign "Every person has a letter," under which anyone can for NIS 1 donate the cost of one letter in a new Torah scroll. Both Ashkenazi and Sephardi Torah scrolls are being written under the campaign, which will also provide Shas with a large pool of names of potential voters. Deri said it is a "great mitzva" to donate to the writing of a Torah. "There are those undermining the Torah today, who want a different state without Torah or Judaism," he said. Deri told reporters that "with all due respect, the son of the Shas leader is not the one who determines things in Shas. That is Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and the Council of Sages. The Council of Sages will when the time come convene and make a final decision."

Liat Collins

Likud justifies criticizing Lebanon deal

Before the elections, the Likud had announced it would honor international agreements including verbal agreements. Likud spokeswoman Ronit Eckstein said yesterday, "That does not detract from our justified criticism of the Grapes of Wrath agreement which had been drawn up under former prime minister Shimon Peres and then foreign minister Ehud Barak. The agreement tied the hands of the IDF, even though Barak at the time proudly announced there would be 'peace for Galilee and free maneuverability.' Neither this nor that happened. That's why the Netanyahu government decided to change the IDF response policy in the face of Hizbullah violations," Eckstein said.

Liat Collins

Shahak blasts PM's ties to US Right

The Center Party's Amnon Lipkin-Shahak yesterday attacked the government's attempts to form alliances with right-wing and Christian fundamentalist groups in the United States, saying such efforts have hurt Israel's standing with the US administration. Speaking to the Israel-American Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Shahak indicated that "while such relations may have had some benefit for the government in the short term, they were bad for our relations with the US in the long term." US officials have said that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's warm welcome last year to former House speaker Newt Gingrich — a constant critic of President Bill Clinton — caused an enormous amount of anger in the White House. Shahak also said that relations with both the US and Egypt had been harmed by the government's use of prisoners Jonathan Pollard and Azzam Azzam as "political cards."

Danna Harman

Tsomet splits from Likud

Tsomet's split from the joint list with the Likud was approved by the Knesset House Committee yesterday. Two of the breakaways, Rafael Eitan and Haim Dayan, then abandoned the remaining Tsomet MK, Moshe Peled, who declared himself a faction called Mehura, before merging with Moledet. The two-step move was made in able to allow Peled to bring individual campaign financing to Moledet. The fourth Tsomet MK, Eliezer Zandberg, already left the joint list with Likud MKs who have established a Center Party faction, in the Knesset called Yisrael Bameretz. House Committee chairman, Raphael Pinhasi, said there are now 15 factions in the Knesset. Ninety days before elections, factions may split away in order to benefit from independent campaign financing. Herut's funding was approved by the committee yesterday.

Nina Gilbert

Three Arab parties unite

MK Azmi Bishara's Balad party, MK Hashem Mahameed's National Unity list, and an unknown party, the Voice of Unity, headed by Said Zavaruk, signed a unity agreement yesterday. Bishara and Mahameed, who were part of the Hadash faction in the present Knesset, intend to become a separate faction to obtain funding. Bishara is to head the joint list, which sees itself as representing secular Israeli Arab nationalism. The party is expected to be more attractive to younger Arabs, compared with the more traditional list headed by Democratic Arab Party leader Abdul Wahab Darawshe, who has renewed its alliance with the Islamic Movement. Contacts are continuing between Bishara and the DAP on widening the joint list, but each believe they have enough support to run alone and obtain a few seats each.

Nina Gilbert

CEC: Meretz 'hamsas' are amulets

Justice Eliahu Mazza, head of the Central Elections Committee, ruled yesterday on a complaint by Shas that Meretz's distribution of hamsas — hand-shaped good luck charms — with prayers for the home was a violation of the election laws. The hamsa was signed by Meretz MK Ran Cohen in areas with public housing, a population which Cohen aims to attract after initiating the Public Housing Law. Mazza ruled that the item "is indeed an amulet" and thus is a violation of the law, and noted that "especially Meretz should show sensitivity to using such outlawed means." Since Meretz's attorney said the distribution had halted and promised not to repeat the violation, Shas accepted Mazza's request not to issue an injunction against Meretz. In another petition, Meretz asked for an injunction against the distribution of promotional material by Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush. The ministry said it would stop distributing the material, and therefore Meretz dropped its demand for an injunction.

Nina Gilbert

Herut status becomes official

Herut was officially recognized yesterday as a new party by the parties registrar. Herut said it would ask the Likud if it would allow it to use the letter *her*, which now belongs to the Likud. Due to the decreasing availability of letters, some parties may have to use numbers. In that case, Herut will ask to use seven.

Nina Gilbert

Gov't gets set to sell off public housing

By LIAT COLLINS

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Finance Minister Meir Sheerit, and Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush yesterday announced the launching of the government campaign to sell public housing at reduced price to long-term residents of the homes. The three made the announcement in Ashkelon, where they met with local residents.

The date for the start of the campaign has been postponed

three times in the past but publicity of the campaign is scheduled to begin next week.

Netanyahu said he had decided to sell off all public housing. He said not only is the housing being offered at substantial discounts, but the government is helping finance the rest of the payment. The reductions could amount to 75 percent.

However, Amidar — the government's housing company — has not yet signed the necessary agreements with the Government

Companies Authority and the Finance Ministry, which would arrange the terms under which Amidar workers would leave the company if they become redundant through the cutback in its work.

The announcement of the campaign met with bitter opposition from Meretz leader Yossi Sarid and Meretz MK Ran Cohen, who had spearheaded his own Public Housing Law with, he said, better benefits.

The two turned up to the empty

Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee room in the morning to protest the fact that Netanyahu had postponed his appearance before the committee. Netanyahu said the meeting was postponed because of a tight schedule and because of the visit to the US by committee chairman Uzi Landau (Likud), who is participating in a joint committee with Congress on missile defense.

Cohen said Netanyahu had canceled the committee meeting "because he preferred to go to

Ashkelon in attempt to steal the opinion of the public housing residents without mentioning that selling the homes was my initiative." Cohen later also went to Ashkelon to meet public housing residents.

"From Netanyahu's point of view," Sarid said, "there is no Lebanon, no burning issues, and no loss of life. There's just an important election campaign which postpones the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee meeting."

Mixed reaction to Rosenblum high school lecture

By HEIDI J. GLEIT

Hard work is the key to her success, Pinna Rosenblum told the pupils at Blich High School yesterday, and encouraged them to follow her example.

"I'm proud, as a woman, of the results I've achieved," she said. "Everyone who wants to succeed, whether a man or a woman, will succeed if he works hard and is faithful to his goals."

In a very personal speech which detailed her entry into the business world and her decision to move into politics, Rosenblum tried to show the pupils why education and equal rights are so important to her.

She got a mixed reaction from the pupils and staff of the Ramat Gan school whose mock elections are considered a bellwether for national elections.

While principal Eitan Singer said that Rosenblum spoke at least as well as many of the veteran politicians who come to speak at the school in the weeks before its mock election, a number of the teachers poked fun at her speech.

Another teacher spent more time telling a group of pupils to listen to Rosenblum than listening to her himself.

"We don't like her," explained Ayelet Friedman, an eleventh grader. "She talked about herself and not the things that matter like [Lebanon and the peace process.] She's not realistic."

Another eleventh grader, Anat Segal, differed, saying that she is going to vote for Rosenblum, "not for her political ideas, but because she's a woman and because of her economic ideas. I feel like she really wants to help."



Knesset candidate Pinna Rosenblum shows off her campaign poster to pupils at Ramat Gan's Blich High School yesterday.

(Mati Miskin/Israel Sun)

Settler council pushes for rightist coalition

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza hopes that the small right-wing parties will reach an agreement to unite on Sunday. Several council members, however, declared that "it will be a miracle if they do."

For some weeks council chairman Pinhas Wallerstein and director Aharon Domb have been pressuring Herut, Tekuma, Moledet, and Tsomet to unite in order to ensure a united national right-wing camp in the coming elections.

While many of the problems

have been ironed out, said council spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar, there are still many issues that have to be agreed upon among the different parties.

One of the main stumbling blocks is to try to persuade MK Ze'ev (Benny) Begin, who heads the Herut list, not to run in the prime ministerial elections, she said.

Meanwhile, council members met yesterday with Begin, Tsomet leader MK Rafael Eitan, Moledet's MK Rehavam Ze'evi and Rabbi Benny Elon, MK Michael Kleiner, Tekuma leader Uri Ariel and MKs Hanan Porat and Zvi Hendel,

founders of new Knesset faction Eimann.

"There has been a lot of progress, but we hope goodwill to work towards a common goal for the good of the country will prevail," said Tayar.

Regarding the latest events in the National Religious Party, Tayar said she believes that the party will lose a lot of support due to Porat and Hendel leaving the party. "Many veteran voters of the NRP who live in our communities have expressed second thoughts about voting for them again," said Tayar.

If the parties decide to unite on Sunday, then the council will devote

its time to deciding whom to support for prime minister, said Tayar, and will start responding to Labor Party leader MK Ehud Barak.

Many council members have expressed being disappointed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Arens, she said.

Council sources declared that if Arens refuses to give the green light to start construction on the

Aroub bypass road, they will not vote for Netanyahu. The issue was a bone of contention when Center Party leader Yitzhak Mordechai was defense minister.

Sources said, moreover, that settlers who welcomed Arens's appointment are now having second thoughts, because he has declined to grant permission to build new neighborhoods in existing communities.

A-G bars ministers from conducting political polls

By DAN IZENBERG

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein yesterday issued a directive to government ministers ordering them not to conduct public opinion polls except for purely professional reasons from now until election day.

"In particular," wrote Rubinstein, "the ministers should not conduct opinion polls testing the satisfaction levels of the public or polls which include ques-

tions about elected officials or candidates."

He also ordered the ministers to obtain the approval of their legal advisers for any questions they intend to put before the public during this period.

"It is natural that the ministers are busy with political and party activities during the election campaign in addition to their ministerial responsibilities," wrote Rubinstein. "The rule is that it is forbidden to use public resources

for election propaganda."

Rubinstein added that the ministries conduct surveys on many topics and some of them can be used by candidates to find out what the public wants. Therefore, there is reason to distinguish between purely professional matters and polls assessing public opinion on national issues. Such questions may be legitimate under normal circumstances, but not during the election campaign, wrote Rubinstein.

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Ahimeir's granddaughter one of two new women rabbis to be ordained

Reform to hold int'l convention here

By HAIM SHAPIRO

The Movement for Progressive Judaism, Israel's Reform movement, is to ordain two women rabbis next week. One, Ada Zavidov, is the granddaughter of the late Revisionist leader, Abba Ahimeir; the other, Miri Gold, is the secretary of her kibbutz.

The ordination is to be a part of a week of events planned by the movement to coincide with the annual convention in Jerusalem of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. About 150 participants, representing 54 communities, are scheduled to arrive for the event.

Zavidov, 39, the eldest granddaughter of the Revisionist writer and activist, said that her grandfather was non-observant, but had a great knowledge of Judaism. He came, she said, from an enlightened traditional family.

"I would describe him as a religious rationalist," she said.

For her, the Reform movement gave her the opportunity to express her belief in the fullest manner, to be a woman rabbi, to wear a talit, and to put on tefillin. She is already serving as the spiritual leader of a community at Tsur Hadassah, near Jerusalem.

Gold, 49, secretary of Kibbutz Gezer, said she sees herself carrying out a pastoral role both as a rabbi and as secretary of the kibbutz.

"As the secretary I'm the listening ear, the final address," she said.

For the kibbutz, she feels, it is especially important to apply what Judaism has to teach to the community, especially in interpersonal relations. For example, she feels the kibbutz ought to start a tzedaka fund for those in need.

She explains that the synagogue at Gezer is part of the Reform movement, but the kibbutz itself is pluralistic and not all mem-

bers identify with the movement. Some come from a traditional background and are uncomfortable with a woman rabbi.

However, she also wants to reach out to the surrounding area. It is already not uncommon for boys and girls from the region to celebrate their bar and bat mitzva at the kibbutz.

"Now that I'm a rabbi, I can also perform weddings at the kibbutz," she said. (Although Reform and Conservative rabbis are not authorized to register marriages in Israel, they often conduct marriage ceremonies for couples who also have civil weddings abroad.)



Sakic trial postponed

Dinko Sakic, former commandant of the Jasenovac concentration camp, sits flanked by guards in a Zagreb courtroom yesterday. His trial for crimes against humanity was adjourned until March 15 for health reasons. The 77-year-old defendant, who was hospitalized Wednesday after he fainted in jail, told the court he felt too weak to follow the sessions. A court-appointed physician said Sakic appeared to be suffering from circulatory problems, and that his life could be at risk if the trial proceeded. "We're very disappointed with the results," Efraim Zaroff, head of the Israel office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said by phone from Zagreb. "Our doubts are strengthened as to Croatia's willingness to prosecute Ustasha criminals."

(Text: Elli Wohlgeheimer; photo: AP)

Suspect remanded in \$60m. fraud case

By AMY KLEIN

A Jerusalem District Court judge yesterday remanded Mea She'arim man Joseph Proshinsky through the end of his trial, following charges that he masterminded a \$60 million international fraud operation.

Proshinsky, 59, has previously served eight months in a US prison for similar crimes, and is wanted by several countries and Interpol.

According to an eight-count indictment, Proshinsky would set up straw companies and attempted to withdraw money from various banks. By this method he withdrew some \$30m. from Dutch ING Bank, which he transferred to his own accounts in England.

He is charged with counterfeiting checks, falsifying documents, and destroying evidence.

According to the indictment, Proshinsky also attempted to defraud the Royal Bank of Canada in Quebec of \$32.5 million in 1996, and the Bank Nationale de Paris of \$95,000 last year.

Proshinsky holds an American passport under the name Joseph Weiss, and police say he also went by the names Mr. Green and Mr. Gross in his contacts with foreign banks.

Judge Ido Habash wrote that he had decided to keep Proshinsky, 59, in custody, because the suspect has "an extraordinary talent for changing identities," which could help him leave the country or destroy evidence.

ADL leader urges Israel to put 'best foot forward' for millennium

By ELI WOHLGEHEIMER

While there are some inherent dangers with the arrival of the millennium next year, there is also a great opportunity for Israel "to put her best foot forward" when millions of Christian tourists visit, according to Rabbi David Rosen, director of the Israel office of the Anti-Defamation League.

"There are dangers of extreme right-wing Christian elements linking up with extreme right-wing Jewish nationalist elements, who might have an unfortunate common interest," Rosen said, adding that it is a situation that should be carefully monitored.

Simultaneously, the arrival of an expected four to six million Christian tourists is a "great opportunity for Israel to put her best foot forward, and to take advantage and to be able to demonstrate all the wonderful good things that exist within this society on this particular occasion."

Moreover, Rosen said at a news conference yesterday morning, it's an opportunity to teach Israeli society about Christianity, that all Christians aren't Catholics and that they are not coming here to proselytize — simply to understand

who's coming and why they're coming is a very important educational endeavor." Rosen said the millions are coming because of the efforts of Pope John Paul II, who Rosen predicted will make his own pilgrimage here between Purim and Pesach next year, sometime around the end of March.



Rabbi David Rosen (Ariel Jerozolinski/Jerusalem Post)

In the area of religion and state, Rosen said a major change that will happen within the next few years is the instituting of

civil marriage, "not because of the good sense of Israeli society but because things only happen in Israel if there is a significant enough electoral constituency to want to make them happen, and in this case there is, because we have at least a quarter of a million Russian Israeli citizens who are not Jewish, who are not Moslem and who are not Christians."

These 250,000 Israelis, or their children, are going to face problems within the very near future, Rosen said, "and therefore some form of civil marriage is an inevitability. It's going to happen to a large extent on the backs of those Russian Israelis, and that's going to be a major change in terms of the inner fabric of religions and state in Israel."

A-G agrees to bail for US citizen facing extradition, despite American opposition

By DAN IZENBERG

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein yesterday told Jerusalem District Court he would agree to release Chaim Berger, 73, an American citizen facing extradition hearings, on \$10 million bail and strict restrictions on his movement.

Berger is wanted by New York State authorities on suspicion of defrauding the US government of \$20 million.

American officials had asked Rubinstein to oppose the bail request, which was put forward by Berger's attorneys. Last week, a High Court of Justice decision not to extradite suspected killer Samuel Sheinbein because he is an Israeli citizen, angered the US government and many American citizens.

Rubinstein wrote that, in general, he opposes releasing candidates for extradition on bail for fear they might try to leave the country and because of Israel's obligations toward the requesting country. He said he decided to make an exception in this case because "of Berger's age, the fact that he is a Holocaust survivor, and because two members of the Agudat Yisrael Council of Sages, the Viznitzer rebbe and the Arzi rebbe, as well as Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush, are prepared to guarantee that he would show up for all the hearings in the extradition process."

Rubinstein demanded that \$3 million in cash and \$7 million in the form of a bank check be put up as bail, that the two rabbis and Porush give their personal guarantee, that Berger remain under house arrest and be allowed to leave his home only twice a day for prayers, that he register with the police every day, that an order be issued barring him from leaving the country, and that he hand over his American and Israeli passports.

Consumers Authority: Cook chicken thoroughly

By JUDY SIEGEL and MICHAEL YUDELMAN

By the end of this year, packaged raw poultry, fish, and maybe even meat products will have to bear Hebrew-language warnings about proper cooking and handling in the kitchen to prevent illness from salmonella infections. Dr. Robert Singer, the Health Ministry's chief veterinarian, said that regulations to require such warnings are now being processed.

The ministry was responding to demands by Histadrut Consumer Authority director Gali Avishai that greater measures be taken to reduce the risk to consumers from contaminated meat and other products.

Avishai cited testing by the authority, which revealed that 56 percent of poultry products are "unsafe" for consumption, 34% are harmful to health, and only 10% meet the standard for being salmonella-free.

More than half the samples were found to be contaminated with salmonella germs and a high count of E. coli. More than 20% of the samples contained Listeria germs.

Beef poses less risk, as — unlike chicken — it is not sold with the skin, Singer explained. Only 20% of raw beef is found to have salmonella.

Singer explained that salmonella infection is lower in the US and Europe, because they do not have to observe the strictures of kashrut, which bar the use of steam or hot water after slaughter to kill pathogens on chicken skin.

The pathogens are especially dangerous for infants, old people, and others with weakened immune systems, but salmonella infection can make anyone ill, he added.

"The consumer can reduce the risk of catching a disease if he or she handles the chicken properly,"

Avishai said yesterday. "She elaborated: 'Chicken must be cooked or fried thoroughly, until no inner part is left pink. This includes chicken livers, which people tend to leave pink inside.'"

"When making chicken soup, boil the bird until all its juices are extracted. That means getting rid of all the foam that clouds up the

water, until the water is clear, like grandmother used to tell us."

Moreover, Avishai said, the consumer "should never use uncooked eggs or even sunny-side-up eggs or lightly scrambled ones, because the heat is not able to kill all the bacteria."

Avishai and Singer both emphasized that salmonella can be trans-

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NEWS

in brief

Eitan threatens Thai poachers with deportation

Agriculture and Environment Minister Rafael Eitan said yesterday he would act to deport Thai workers caught poaching, and would find a way to punish their employers to ensure tighter supervision of the workers. Nature Protection and National Parks Authority wardens recently reported that three wolves, part of a research project, were killed in the Golan Heights, apparently by Thai workers in the area. The authority proposed making Thai workers sign a declaration that they will not hunt illegally during their stay in Israel. *Liat Collins*

Woman bludgeoned by husband

A man attacked his wife with a wooden hammer in Jerusalem's East Talpiot neighborhood yesterday. She was taken to Hadassah-University Hospital, Ein Kerem, and is listed in satisfactory to good condition. Jerusalem police arrested the husband, who is to undergo psychiatric evaluation, as he is believed to be emotionally disturbed. *Amy Klein*

Local court to try Miss World rape case

Tel Aviv District Court ruled yesterday that despite a separate investigation being conducted in Italy, Uri (Nur) Shlomo will be tried in Israel on suspicion that he abducted and raped Miss World, Linor Abergil, in October in Milan. His lawyer, David Yiftach, said he plans to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court. An Italian prosecutor was in Israel this week seeking to question Shlomo in light of new evidence from a laboratory test of his car. He refused to be questioned here, and requested that she question him in Italy. *Heidi J. Gleit*

Youths vandalize teachers' cars

Jerusalem police youth investigators yesterday detained three pupils accused of attacking the cars of two teachers they disliked. In one incident, a 16-year-old boy vandalized his teacher's car, seriously damaging it. According to police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby, the teenager said he vandalized the car because the teacher had humiliated him. In the second incident, in another school, police said two twelfth-grade girls admitted to vandalizing their teacher's car because she "bothered" them. *Amy Klein*

Green groups to protest and party on the beach

Environmental groups are staging a demonstration and party this afternoon at Tel Aviv's "Banana Beach" to protest the city's decision to build a restaurant and facilities for life guards there. Shortly before he was elected mayor, Ron Huldai promised that the city would not build on the beach, one of the few parts of the Tel Aviv coastline that is not built up, said a spokeswoman for Green Action, which is coordinating the demonstration. The demonstration at Banana Beach, one block north of the Dohinarium, is scheduled to last from noon until sunset. No comment was available from the municipality. *Heidi J. Gleit*

3,500 local Moslems going on Haj

This year, 3,500 Israeli Moslems will travel to Saudi Arabia to fulfill the Islamic precept of the Haj. They have been issued 25-day visas and will leave in two groups, tomorrow and Sunday, in 71 buses, via the Allenby Bridge. Another group of 300 will travel by air from Amman to Jeddah.

Representatives of the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Religious Affairs will be on hand at the Allenby Bridge to help officials in assisting the pilgrims. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

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Priority: High accents soon forgot

Everything makes sense in the Twilight Zone.

In that strange world of illness, suspended on a tripod of pain, fever, and drugs, it is perfectly logical to listen to four banal words from an old quotation gyrate slowly around two familiar icons from a computer screen.

Round and round, hour after hour, day after day. Pretty pictures.

Nice words, eventually driving you insane.

It was odd to come back to the land of the semi-living this week and find that sound and image were news - news tragic, and news idiotic.

We all know that what we say can significantly alter our lives: "Hey, Mike Tyson, you moron! How did you get to be such a retarded jerk?" Goodbye head, ears, and all.

But did we know that simply how we sound can be lethal? Linda Adams, a survivor of the dreadful massacre of tourists in southern Uganda by Hutu thugs from Rwanda, described how the terrorists singled out Britons and Americans from the group by their accents.

Tragedy to idiom
Eight of the 14 safari park hostages were killed. Six escaped and the others, with "politically correct accents," were freed by the French-speaking murderers.

Linda, 29, from Alamo, California, was both clever and lucky. She simulated a bad asthma attack, both disguising her accent, and persuading the terrorists she would hold them back on their journey.

They could have shot her, of course, but they didn't.

Meanwhile, back to the idiom. The renowned British author Beryl Bainbridge got great play in the British media this week by saying that all children should be forced to have elocution lessons to erase every trace of accent. Miss Bainbridge had just won the \$16,000 W. H. Smith literary award for her novel *Master Georgie*, proving, at 64, that neither age nor literacy bring wisdom.

Depressing, isn't it?

"All regional accents should simply be wiped out," she said.

Presumably, if the poor unfortunate hostages in Uganda had spoken English with a South African accent - or a Hutu-French one - they would have been spared.

There is a corollary of course. One September evening in 1984 I was forced into a doorway off Rue El Rachedine, Beirut, by two large Hizbullah goons wearing black T-shirts and red headbands, with "Allah" inscribed thereon.

Right answer

The hunters inquired if my accent was American or British. "Irish," I blabbered. "Ah, Irish! IRA! Very good the IRA - anti-imperialist." You betcha, I agreed shamelessly, and swiftly scuttled off to the Commodore to pack my bags. Weeks later, my companion Brian Keenan vanished into his "evil cradling" for years, accent and all. It no longer mattered.

As if we don't have enough excuses of race, religion, color, and gender to discriminate, stereotype, abuse, and exclude one another, Bainbridge - an author of 16 novels, no less - wants to add accent.

It was said that after World War II, Dutch border guards would check for fleeing Nazis pretending to be Dutch by getting them to pronounce some of their unpronounceable agglomerations of gutturals and diphthongs.

One man's discrimination is another's affirmative action. Bainbridge's wail against English accents is not new.

As (Irishman) George Bernard Shaw observed in *Pygmalion*, the result of one Englishman opening his mouth is to make some other Englishman despise him.

Yet her plea for the abolition of accent is as forlorn as a plea for the abolition of nationalism or religion as a way to better humanity. Philosophically laudable in a global village perhaps, but don't you dare include my Welsh, or Scottish, or Catholic, or Jewish pride.

Bainbridge's own voice is a twittering, squeaky, scratchy thing, honed by decades of tobacco. No American could mistake her for anything but a quaint old Brit with a funny accent.

Rine in Spine

Yet she claims her accent was eliminated by private elocution lessons from the age of 11, which helped her literary career. These lessons must have been of "the rine in Spine falls minely on the pline" variety.

The writer was raised in Liverpool, where the accent is "Scouse," a unique hybrid of Irish and Lancashire, made familiar to the world by the Beatles. What she has done is exchange the vibrant, colorful accent of a marvelous city for the twittering artificiality of the genteel chattering classes.

What Miss Bainbridge should be railing against is not accent at all, but ignorance. Would she dare confront a man with a fine Scottish accent and a degree in literature or engineering, and tell him to be rid of it? Aye think noo, lads 'n lassies, I think noo.

A campaign to be rid of accents in the English language would paralyze the entire Irish tourism industry, emptying Dublin pubs of those dark and mysterious exchanges as a new customer enters: "Windy?" "No," "us Thursday." "Begob, so am I, I'll have a small Jameson."

We don't need your campaign, Miss Bainbridge. In the British Isles over the past three decades, accents have melted out considerably under the all enveloping influence of radio and television. The nation has not become noticeably less dumb as a result, nor does it read more books.

Remember Shelley: "When the lute is broken, sweet tones are remembered not; When the lips have spoken, loved accents are soon forgot."

Lewinsky's greatest fear: losing immunity from prosecution

By LARRY MARGASAK

WASHINGTON (AP) - After sharing her innermost feelings about her presidential affair and her loathing for investigator Kenneth Starr, Monica Lewinsky says her major worry now is "doing something to lose my immunity" from prosecution.

In an ABC interview with Barbara Walters and a book entitled *Monica's Story*, Lewinsky let the public share her anguish - about her relationship with Bill Clinton, her sex life with others and the main players in the drama that led to a historic impeachment trial of the president.

Some parts of her story were previously untold: her thoughts of hurling herself out a 10th floor window when prosecutors first confronted her about the affair; her abortion, the result of an affair with a fellow Pentagon worker in 1996 before her relationship with Clinton ended; and her feeling now that Clinton is "a much bigger liar than I ever thought."

For her television interview, Lewinsky wore a black pants suit and smiled often as she recalled some of the fondest - and even her most painful - moments of the relationship with Clinton. But her eyes became moist as she described her "very wonderful mom" Marcia Lewis - who knew of the affair and was forced to provide anguished testimony before a grand jury.

Only once, while recounting the pain the crisis has caused her family, she broke down crying. "People have no idea about what this has done... It was so destructive," she said, tears streaming.

Both the Clintons left Washington for a day their friends and aides admitted would be painful. The president went to a fund-raiser in New Jersey; the first lady tested the political waters in New York where she's considering a bid for US Senate.

Countering Clinton's assertion under oath that only Lewinsky performed acts of sexual gratification, Lewinsky flashed a wide grin and answered "yes" when Walters asked whether Clinton did things "that made you feel, as a woman, happy and contented."

Lewinsky saved some of her harshest words for the investiga-



Monica Lewinsky (right) sits alongside ABC's Barbara Walters, who interviewed her about her affair with President Bill Clinton, in a show aired Wednesday night in the United States.

tion of her affair by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. "I really felt raped and physically ill with myself," she said.

Her hook spared no words for Starr's prosecutors in their attempts to gather evidence that Clinton committed perjury and obstructed justice. One of the prosecutors is derided as a "revolting specimen of humanity" and another as a "pit-bull terrier."

But the former intern, who has immunity from prosecution from Starr, remains worried that he's not through with her.

"I'm afraid of doing something to lose my immunity," she said. "And being prosecuted. Or having my family prosecuted."

Months before her immunity

deal with Starr was sealed last summer, Lewinsky filed a false affidavit denying an affair with the president, for the case of a former Arkansas state worker who filed a lawsuit accusing Clinton of sexual harassment.

"Did you know that you were committing perjury?" Walters asked.

"No," Lewinsky replied. "I think I knew I was lying, but I had no knowledge. I mean I had no idea what all the different elements of perjury were at that time."

Describing her feelings about Clinton now, Lewinsky said in the book by Andrew Morton: "I was hit by the fact that I don't have him in my life anymore. I just

miss him so much right now."

But she also called Clinton "a selfish man who lies all the time" and said sometimes "I have to turn off the TV because I feel sick looking at him."

When Walters brought up the abortion, Lewinsky nodded and said it was "a very sensitive subject." No further conversation was aired on the subject, and the veteran interviewer had to explain that Lewinsky was "clearly uncomfortable" discussing it.

Lewinsky slightly lost her composure, placing her hand on her face, as Walters played a tape of her becoming hysterical during a taped conversation with Linda Tripp - the Pentagon employee who eventually revealed the affair

to Starr's prosecutors.

Portions of the book focused on Starr's tactics - calling them "a matter for grave public concern." The whole exchange about immunity was a waste of time except insofar as it exposed the dubious methods employed by Starr's investigators.

Deputy Independent Counsel Jackie Bennett said Wednesday he could not comment on the book because his office hadn't seen it.

For her final question, Walters asked what Lewinsky would tell her children in the future about the incident. "Mommy made a big mistake," she answered.

"And that," Walters concluded, "is the understatement of the year."

Lewinsky attacks Starr in book

By GRANT MCCOOL

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Monica Lewinsky says in the book *Monica's Story*, released yesterday, that Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr secretly worked with lawyers for Paula Jones to build a trap for US President Bill Clinton over his affair with the former White House intern.

In the book by Princess Diana's biographer Andrew Morton, Lewinsky makes her first personal criticism of the Starr prosecution team, saying she still lives in fear of it and was almost driven to suicide by her questioners in a hotel room on January 16, 1998.

The language of the immunity agreement under which Lewinsky, 25, testified to a grand jury about the affair harried her from discussing the conduct of Starr's office in two television interviews, but the deal did not apply to the book.

Starr's office made no immediate response to Lewinsky's assertions in the book, which was No. 1 on the Amazon.com best-seller list before it arrived in US stores yesterday.

Published by St. Martin's Press in New York, the 288-page book covered personal details of Lewinsky's life from childhood to her sexual affair with Clinton. The president was acquitted last month by the US Senate on perjury and obstruction of justice charges stemming from the relationship.

Lewinsky told Morton that when the voluminous Starr Report was sent to Congress she "felt raped" and that "the world looked at me as a whore."

"It confirmed to me even more that no one cared for me as a person, no one saw me as a human being. I was just a pawn used to get the president," said Lewinsky, who was reportedly paid about \$600,000 for her story and will receive 10 percent of the royalties from each \$24.95 book sold. Amazon.com was selling the book for \$14.95.

St. Martin's Press, which is owned by German media conglomerate Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, shipped 450,000 copies to booksellers.

In a chapter entitled "Terror in Room 1012" Lewinsky said pro-

secutor Michael Emmick called her new attorney William Ginsburg, offering to fax a copy of an affidavit in which she denied having an affair with Clinton.

"Monica remembers that, during the exchange between Emmick and Ginsburg, the former offered to fax her new attorney a copy of her false affidavit," Morton wrote in the chapter detailing Lewinsky's questioning by prosecutors and FBI agents in Room 1012 of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

"The two FBI agents, however, pulled him roughly away from the telephone. They realized that Ginsburg would instantly understand that the OIC (Office of the Independent Counsel) had seen a copy of her affidavit before it had been filed, which meant that in all probability it had come from Paula Jones' lawyers," according to the book.

The US Justice Department is planning to investigate whether prosecutors improperly attempted to make Lewinsky cooperate without a lawyer present and whether prosecutors had improper contact with lawyers for Jones.

Cohen asked to defend new job for Tripp

WASHINGTON (AP) - A Virginia congressman demanded to know Wednesday why the US Defense Department is paying Linda Tripp more than \$90,000 a year at the same time it is making drastic cuts elsewhere in the Pentagon's civilian work force.

"I'll answer that one for the record," Defense Secretary William Cohen told Rep. Jim Moran, a Democrat, indicating he would submit his answer in writing later.

"I suspected you would," Moran told Cohen, who was testifying before the House Appropriations defense subcommittee on President Bill Clinton's fiscal 2000 defense budget.

Moran, who represents the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, where many Pentagon workers live, said it is "something that has been [bothering] me for some time," particularly since so many of civilian defense jobs in the area had been cut by Clinton in the name of government streamlining.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of
TOVA GITEL GOLDSTEIN טובה גיטל גולדשטיין
wife of Asher Goldstein אפרים
Her funeral took place yesterday, 17 Adar 5759.
The grieving families: Goldstein, Nulman, and Adelman
Shiva at the home of the deceased, Migdal Nofim, Apt. 617,
Rehov Hemitza Szold, Kiryat Hayovel, Jerusalem.
Shaharit, 07:00; mincha, 20 minutes before sunset; ma'ariv,
during evening. Condolence visits 09:00-13:00; 16:00-21:00.

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share in the grief of the family on the passing of
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A noble and courageous woman, council member
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May you know no further sorrow

With sorrow, we announce the passing of our
beloved mother and grandmother
BLANCHE (Goldberg) BAMBERGER
Funeral on Friday, March 5, 1999 at 12 noon
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Kadish Goldberg and family, Tirat Zvi
Honey Berenson and family, Rehovot
Mark Goldberg, Jerusalem
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through Wednesday at 5 Rehov Hanassi, Jerusalem.

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הכרזה מן האוכל

in brief

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Labor's window dressing

Ehud Barak's One Israel concept may turn out to be the equivalent of a Purim costume — a change of appearance with a marginal, mildly amusing, and temporary effect. If so, the price paid for it may have been too high and a distraction too great from the real electoral shortcomings it was designed to address.

The idea of broadening the electoral base of the Labor Party is certainly a politically sensible one, verging on the obvious. Since the "revolution" of the Likud's Menachem Begin in 1977, the Labor Party has held the short end of the demographic stick. In rough terms, Labor has appealed to Ashkenazi and Arab voters, while the Likud has been stronger among Jews of North African or Asian origin, the religious, and Russian voting blocs. Yitzhak Rabin was Labor's only candidate in recent times who broke the Likud's electoral lock, and then only barely and as a result of the initial fluidity of the Russian vote and a split in the Right in the 1992 election.

Thinking systematically, as is his wont, Barak has tried to tack on new elements to Labor's "natural" base. Barak's controversial apology to Sephardim on behalf of the "generations" of Labor leaders was his first attempt; but seems to have largely failed flat, particularly following Labor MK Ori Orr's embarrassing insults to Moroccans. The courting of David Levy's Geshet Party is the current attempt and it, too, is problematic.

According to the agreement ratified by Labor's central committee yesterday, Geshet will receive three reserved slots on the One Israel list. David Levy will be No. 3 on the list, just after Barak and Shimon Peres, and just before Shlomo Ben-Ami, the top vote-getter in the Labor primaries.

Some, such as Labor MK Ephraim Sneh, have criticized this part of the agreement, saying the price paid to David Levy was too high. There is little evidence, after all, that on his own Geshet could garner three Knesset seats. In its first test as an independent party, Geshet did poorly in the Histadrut elections, and Levy's son, Jackie, lost to a Labor candidate for mayor in his home town of Beit She'an.

Binyamin Netanyahu paid an even higher price to Levy in the 1996 elections — six guaranteed seats. But then, it was arguably critical

for Netanyahu to remove Levy as a candidate for prime minister, even if he would have won only a small number of votes. Barak had no such need to "pay" Levy not to run, so Levy's value to him should only be measured by the number of additional votes Barak and the One Israel list will receive due to the agreement.

It is far from clear whether this gambit will work for Labor, since Levy's presence may not convince even voters who believe in his brand of "social" politics to support the new political amalgam. Others, who do not relish the prospect of David Levy again being foreign minister, or who are repelled by harmful denigration passing for compassion in the economic sphere, will be less likely to vote for Labor and its candidate for prime minister.

The other half of the One Israel deal — the absorption of the moderate-religious Meimad movement — may be a more unequivocally positive asset to the Labor Party. Labor was clearly hurt by its association with Meretz's aggressive brand of anti-religious politics in the last election. Meimad, by contrast, is an attractive group to significant numbers of Israelis who respect tradition and want to see it reflected in the public domain, but are repelled by the haredi religious parties and the extremism they represent.

A Meimad minister would likely be a positive addition to the cabinet, and the "New Covenant" that Meimad helped design would be a constructive, even revolutionary, contribution to the Labor platform. The last-minute backtracking from adding Meimad-proposed revisions of the status quo, including the overdue abolition of the religious councils, unfortunately indicates that Meimad's inclusion may in fact be a sham. In general, the One Israel concept will backfire if it is seen to represent pandering to certain sectors of society, without the substantive changes to Labor's platform and attitudes that would mark a lasting change of heart.

Politics is about creating a home for varied groups of people. Adding a wing to the house, or changing the curtains, could make a home more inviting, but it could repel others. In the end, it is what goes on inside the house that makes newcomers feel at home or not. The One Israel concept will only succeed, if the newcomers become insiders, and the new structure is not just window dressing.

"Anything you can do, I can do better..."



In praise of the routine

DOV S. ZAKHEIM

Moshe Arens is certainly no stranger to US Secretary of Defense William Cohen. The two men have known each other for years, at least since Arens was ambassador to the US and Cohen served to the US Senate. Their planned meeting next week will, however, be the first time that the two men meet as ministers of defense. But unless the hostilities in Lebanon take a serious turn for the worse, it will not be the most momentous of meetings.

Arens is seen in Washington as a caretaker minister. His poor showing in the Likud primaries simply underscored the surprise in Washington policy circles that if Binyamin Netanyahu is reelected, a prospect viewed with distaste in many of those same circles, Arens will quickly be replaced.

Cohen, for his part, has other major concerns on his mind. He is managing an ongoing low-level war with Iraq that his generals argue is achieving results, but that could unravel at any moment if an American pilot is shot down and captured by Saddam Hussein's embattled air defense forces. He is concerned about Jordan's future and that of King Abdullah II, whom he will have met before arriving in Tel Aviv.

This is not to say that there are no issues for the two to discuss. Israel seeks additional American financial support for its Nautilus laser anti-rocket program. Israel shares America's concern about both Saddam's continuation in power and the Iranian missile threat. Finally, Israel is finding itself caught in the middle of a

budget tussle between the White House and the Congress that is not of its own making.

The administration has trumpeted a significant increase in defense spending for the new fiscal year, which begins October 1. Closer scrutiny of its budget proposals

battery, but has neglected to provide for it in its new budget proposal for fiscal year 2000. No doubt Arens, a long-time supporter of the Arrow, will have something to say about that when he meets Cohen.

The administration has promised to finance a third Arrow missile battery, but has neglected to provide for it in its new budget proposal

has revealed, however, that an advertised increase of \$12.4 billion actually is closer to \$2 billion. Moreover, much of the supposed "new" money will only become available in future years, when a new administration is in office.

The Clinton team's slick budgeting, coming at a time when the costs of deployments to Bosnia and Iraq continue to mount, and when a new deployment to Kosovo seems imminent, has left Congress in a surly mood. Yet it is exactly this sort of budget planning that the Congress is also being asked to support with respect to funding two key programs affecting Israel. These are a third Arrow anti-missile battery and the \$1.2 billion program to which Washington is committed to conjunction with the Wye accords.

The Arrow missile issue is quite straightforward. The administration has promised to finance the

THE WYE matter is more complex, and even more symptomatic of the administration's budgetary gamesmanship. Even as the Wye accord is going nowhere, at least for the time being, the Congress has been asked to finance the American commitment with monies from other accounts, including over \$200 million from the fiscal year 1999 optional missile defense (NMD) program.

As is the case with the overall defense budget, the administration promises to replenish that program in what are called the out-years, that is, in later years of its fiscal year 2000-2005 defense program. But congressional veterans are wise to the fact that funds slated for those years constitute what is widely termed funny money. They have little validity at any time, and especially so in a lame duck administration's budget.

When the administration first aired its scheme in late 1998, con-

gressional leaders roundly rejected it. The Republican-led Congress has been especially ardent in its support of acquiring the means to defend the American homeland against ballistic missile attack. Nevertheless, the administration, whose attitude to the missile defense program has been lukewarm at best, included the NMD-for-Wye offset arrangement in its new budget proposal. Not surprisingly, NMD advocates are furious.

As Congressman Curt Weldon, the Republican who chairs the House National Security Committee's research and development subcommittee, complained at a hearing on February 25, "Why are we back-dooring the missile defense accounts to pay for something that has nothing to do with missile defense?" Wye indeed.

As Moshe Arens knows better than most, the fate of the NMD/Wye program will lie with the Congress, not with his American interlocutor. The fact that Cohen will be offering reassurances on a program over which he has little control to a defense minister whose days are already being numbered should not necessarily be taken as a bad thing, however. On the contrary, it demonstrates that the American-Israeli security relationship goes beyond specific issues, or indeed, specific personalities. And that is a good sign for its future health and vitality.

The writer is chief executive officer of SFC International Corporation, Arlington, Virginia, and former deputy undersecretary of defense in the Reagan administration.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KINDERTRANSPORT REUNION

Sir, - To mark the 60th anniversary of the saving of nearly ten thousand Jewish children from the Nazis, in what became known as "Kindertransport," a three-day reunion will be held in London in mid-June this year.

On the second day of this reunion, special arrangements are being made for "Kinder" brought out by different organizations or persons to meet as a group, thus renewing old friendships, recount the various experiences, etc. I would like to arrange for the so-called "Schonfeld Kinder" to meet on that day. In order to make the necessary arrangements I appeal

to all those Kinder who wish to help mark this special day and pay tribute to the remarkable and wonderful person who saved us, to get in touch with me as soon as possible.

I can be contacted as follows: Emanuel Fischer, P.O.B. 18279, Jerusalem 97753, Israel, or phone/fax: +972-2-581-7819.

Looking forward to hearing soon from my fellow 'Schonfeld Kinder.'

EMANUEL FISCHER

Jerusalem.

WINGATE MEMORIAL

Sir, - Col. Jonathan Orde Wingate, son of Gen. Orde Charles Wingate OBM, will be in Israel at the end of this month to participate in ceremonies marking the 55th anniversary of his father's death.

He would like to meet persons who knew his father or served in the Special Night Squads that his father organized and led against the Arab gangs in Palestine in the late 1930s, or served under him in

ENGLISH SUBTITLES, PLEASE

Sir, I saw a good movie recently that has been widely acclaimed by critics. Although ours gave it only two stars, *Central Station*. My enjoyment of the film was marred by the fact that the subtitles were only in Hebrew. My Hebrew is good, I speak it and read it, but I found that I couldn't keep up with the pace of the film (nor could my companion, a tourist from the States). I'm sure that there are enough Anglos here - olim, tourists, and people like me - to warrant having English subtitles. To whom it may concern and the powers that be... please.

TAMAR H. KAGAN

Jerusalem

WHO WILL PAY?

Sir, - Assuming the haredim achieve their conversion goals of having every man, woman and child in Israel achieve Orthodox: Who will be left to

pay the bills?

LARRY DAUGHERTY

Omer.

SRAYA SHAPIRO

Sir, - I recently read about the death of your columnist Sraya Shapiro and I, and I am sure thousands of others, would like to express both our condolences to his family and to *The Jerusalem Post*, which has lost a journalist of penetrating insight and integrity.

The themes of his column were for me, and I am sure for many others, a welcome reminder of the hardy men and women of pre-Israel and of the early Israel, which laid the solid foundations of the State itself.

JONATHAN HELLERMAN

Givatayim.

GOD BLESS FOLEY

Sir, - It made me so very glad to know that Frank Foley is finally to be honored by Yad Vashem for being the righteous gentile he was. I thank the Almighty that I am still alive to see the man who saved my life thus honored.

I wonder whether it has occurred to anyone, that not only the many people he saved are alive, but also their descendants.

I myself have 5 children and 18 grandchildren, none of whom would ever have seen the light of day had I not lived. There must be countless men, women and children today who would never have been born had not Foley saved their parents or grandparents.

May God bless his memory and also the family of this outstanding personality.

EVA HIRSCHFELD

Kibbutz Erez.

The complexities of Lebanon

MOSHE ZAK

of being elected he will have pulled the IDF out of Lebanon.

Their American campaign advisers rely on the Eisenhower precedent. During the 1952 election campaign Ike promised to bring the boys back from Korea. In this case, the border was preserved and the status quo between

only Hafez Assad stayed away.

The prevailing opinion here is that either the Syrians or the present government in Israel had ended the negotiations in Wye. In fact, the previous government had called them off until Syria condemned terror and banished the terrorist headquarters from

Election campaigns tend to focus on slogans, not the long-term requirements for peace

North and South Korea maintained. This was not the case in the American withdrawal from Vietnam, after which the separation between north and south disintegrated and there was a reign of terror for many years.

Since the peace treaty did not prevail, Henry Kissinger even asked the Nobel Prize committee to rescind its prize.

Election campaigns tend to focus on slogans, not take into account long-term requirements for peace. Anyone who wishes to reach a fair arrangement with the Syrians must take into account that such public statements merely serve to raise the price which Syria will demand.

"I HAVE NO intention of renewing negotiations with Syria under the present terms," Peres said at the beginning of March 1996 - and he was right. Despite the beat election campaign, no one objected, except a few anonymous officials at the Foreign Ministry.

There was little interest in the Wye talks as everyone's attention was focused on the suicide bombings which created a state of turmoil in Israel.

This resulted in the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, designed to find ways of combating terror. The leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain all attended;

Damascus. It was only later on, when we sought to renew the talks, that the Syrians presented unacceptable pre-conditions.

Syria's overt condition was that Israel must first agree to withdraw to pre-June 4, 1967 lines, that is, beyond the international border, thus recognizing its conquests in the War of Independence. The Syrians dressed their demand for a commitment to total withdrawal in the guise of renewing the talks at the point at which they had broken off. There were some indications that Syria might raise some other demands such as international control of Dimona and the cancellation of the Turkish-Israeli strategic cooperation.

Syria claimed that the Americans had led it to understand that Israel had committed itself to a total withdrawal in return for peace. However, in a letter to Netanyahu dated September 19, 1996, secretary of state Warren Christopher made it clear that Israel had given no such pledge. Nonetheless, the Syrians persisted. In all the messages exchanged between Jerusalem and Damascus concerning the possibility of renewing the talks, the Syrians made it clear that there would be no talks as long as Israel refused to agree to their terms.

Despite this, Binyamin Netanyahu continued to promise the Knesset that "peace with Syria will be achieved during the current term." And he now talks of an agreement within a year, the time remaining to the end of his original term.

But it takes two to make an agreement. And on display of weakness in the face of Syria's remote-control operations in Lebanon is no way to reach an agreement. On the contrary, agreement can only be reached when both sides despair of achieving a military victory. Or alternatively, when both sides are convinced that their interests demand peace between them. If Syria is convinced that it can succeed in wearing Israel down, it will lose the incentive to compromise.

Israel has once before signed an agreement for total withdrawal from Lebanon. Moshe Arens was also defense minister on May 17, 1983, when an agreement with the government of Lebanon for an IDF withdrawal, on condition that Syria would withdraw its forces from Lebanon as well, was signed. The agreement was approved by the parliament in Beirut, although due to threats from Damascus, president Amin Gemayel did not ratify it.

Israel is no longer making its withdrawal from Lebanon contingent on that of the Syrian army, but the Syrians are not satisfied with this and are demanding complete withdrawal of the IDF to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. If Israel gives in to this blackmail, it will be presented with a long list of further Syrian dictates.

Any Israeli leader who genuinely wishes to reach agreement with Syria must not give the rulers in Damascus the impression that we are begging for mercy for an IDF which is trapped in Lebanon. Assad knows no mercy; he only recognizes interests.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On March 5, 1934, *The Palestine Post* reported an urgent appeal calling upon Jewish workers in major cities to volunteer for employment in agricultural settlements. The picking of citrus was suffering due to a

grave shortage of Jewish labor and that in consequence illegal Arab immigrants from Haifa and Transjordan were easily finding employment.

25 years ago: On March 5, 1974, *The Jerusalem Post* reported

ed that Egypt had returned two Israeli citizens, alleged spies, in exchange for 65 Arabs from the administered territories convicted of conspiracy and sabotage.

Alexander Zvielli

هكذا من الأصل

The complex lessons of Purim

GERALD M. STEINBERG

Life seemed much less complex in the days of Mordechai, Esther, and Haman.

A simple reading of the Megilla (the Book of Esther) portrays a world (or at least the 127 nations in the Persian Empire) divided neatly between good and evil. Esther, Mordechai, and the Jews, exiles from the Kingdom of Judah, are the heroes, saved by their own actions and assisted by the hidden hand of God. Haman, his wife Zeresh, their sons, and numerous followers were archetypal anti-semites. They were the descendants of Amalek, whose attack on the Israelites in the desert was motivated by hatred, rather than conflict over land or resources. When the Jews, led by Mordechai, defeat Haman, the picture of good triumphing over evil is complete.

If only our situation today would mirror the events of the Megilla. In Lebanon, we are facing an enemy whose goals of destroying Israel are no less evil than those of Haman. Ostensibly fighting for an end to the Israeli "occupation," Hizbullah's leaders reject all proposals that would insure the security of northern Israel. The self-proclaimed "Party of God," is another terrorist group, closely linked to the Islamic militants in Iran and protected by the Syrian army.

In contrast to the events in Shushan some 2,500 years ago, today, the application of subtlety and wisdom appear to be exclusively on the side of evil. The fools and clowns seem to be some of the main Israeli politicians who, like King Ahasuerus, are focused exclusively on their personal interests and petty power struggles.

A closer reading of the Megilla shows that the situation was not as simple and one-dimensional as portrayed in school. The initial response of the Jews, including Mordechai and Esther, was one of panic. They tore their clothes, and went into mourning, as if Haman's plans had already been carried out. The situation seemed hopeless. (The conversations in the cafes in the Jewish quarter of Shushan probably sounded like this week's news and talk-show broadcasts.)

The foundation for divine intervention (behind the scenes - God's name does not appear in this biblical book) came through a careful plan, which took time and patience to implement. And ultimately, even after Haman and his sons had been killed, the Jewish forces had to fight a major war, in which they killed 75,000 of their enemies.

As the Megilla emphasizes, the diplomatic and military successes



of the Jews created fear among their enemies - deterrence in today's terminology. However, in a war like this, the Jews surely also suffered casualties. At the same time (and in the same sentences), we are told of the large numbers of allies that took the side of the Jews when they recognized the likely outcome.

THERE are important lessons that go beyond the simplistic and one-dimensional religious interpretations. First, the happy ending was the result of a carefully developed diplomatic plan, whose success depended on encouraging conflicting interests between Haman and Ahasuerus. As the king began to see Haman as a threat to his own position, he suddenly woke up (literally) and Haman was trapped. The trap was

set by Esther, whose subtlety and diplomatic skills put today's Israeli diplomats and leaders to shame. How does this relate to Lebanon? The various candidates for prime minister are busy making bold statements about negotiating an agreement with Syria, but these all lack credibility. The price, as the Syrians have made clear for many years, is full withdrawal from the Golan Heights (according to their definition of full withdrawal). There are no indications that Hafez Assad is prepared to lower the cost, and few incentives for him to do so. After all, Israel is bleeding slowly in Lebanon, and the internal conflicts that result are weakening the Jewish state even further.

To leave southern Lebanon without ensuring increased terrorism,

we need a plan that is based on subtlety and diplomacy. Taking our cue from the story of Purim, Israeli leaders need to magnify the conflicting interests between Syria and Lebanon. An Israeli withdrawal, under the right conditions and at the right time, serves the interests of the Lebanese people, but (as noted above) not those of the Assad regime.

However, this means that the withdrawal cannot be seen to be the result of Syrian policies or support, but rather as an indication of strength.

Israel also needs allies - the US and the West - to provide the Lebanese government with the "carrots" which it will lose if it continues to support terrorism, and which will increase significantly if it is able to control the use of its territory following a uni-

lateral Israeli withdrawal. This is in the interest of the US and Europe, if they wish to avoid a major war in the region.

As the end of the Megilla emphasizes, military force goes hand in hand with skilled diplomacy (and vice versa). The threat of intense punishment is necessary to ensure that when Israel does withdraw, southern Lebanon does not again become a safe haven for terror. The Israeli leaders who order the withdrawal must be prepared to respond immediately and overwhelmingly to any attacks afterward.

On a careful reading, the story of Purim is not so simple after all.

Like other biblical narratives, the lessons are complex. The challenges are in the interpretation, and also in the implementation of the lessons.

Middle Israel
AMOTZ ASA-EL

Labor's Ehud pangs

The good news is that during his two years as leader of the opposition Ehud Barak has launched a genuine effort to seize the Middle Israeli electorate.

The bad news is that Labor's embattled leader seems full of his alter ego Yitzhak Rabin's shallowness, impatience, and unoriginality, while lacking the slain premier's legendary luck.

The latest instance came this week, when the former minister of foreign affairs, chief of General Staff, and head of military intelligence suddenly saw the light and announced that if elected he would withdraw from Lebanon by June 2000.

Evidently, Barak has adopted this view only after this month's tragic

war's sober conclusion that, on the merit of his own charisma, ideas, and organizational skills, he would at best be the has-been seated next to MK Pnina Rosenblum.

Considering Levy's loss of an opinion to return to the Likud and the nausea he elicits among Middle Israelis, Barak would have been better off letting him rot on the political margins as a monument to the Likud's brazen abuse of the middle classes and patronizing of the working classes.

Moreover, Barak's failure to end up with more than Levy's blighted bones in his bag is the ultimate anticlimax of his much-heralded apology to Israel's non-Ashkenazim.

To truly inspire the disaffected among us, Barak should have part-

One Israel not only fails to capture Labor's long-lost proletarian constituents and religious allies but almost etches in stone the party's aloofness

events; otherwise, why didn't he seek a pullout instead of helping devise, as foreign minister, the Grapes of Wrath understandings back in '96?

One must wonder why it took long years and scores of casualties for Barak to discern what a less pretentious strategist like Yossi Beilin saw early on, namely that South Lebanon is a guerrilla trap where Israel stands to lose precious military blood without gaining diplomatic oxygen.

Or should we suspect that Barak isn't more prepared to leave Lebanon now than Richard Nixon was to abandon Vietnam in '68, but like the latter he is after a pull-out promise's electoral appeal?

Barak's new Lebanon rhetoric might have been more compelling had it been coupled with the humility of a concession that the aspiring premier has actually changed his general's spots.

How about a confession like: "The death of Erez Gerstein, whom I adored as a younger model of my own self, was for me the last straw. Suddenly I realized that the endless patrols outside Jezzine, the night-long ambushes beyond the Litani, and the pre-dawn interrogations in the El Khiam jail, all of which flourished under my command, actually add up to an exercise in futility."

While the tendency to avoid admitting such a gross error of judgement is understandable, Barak's hasty pullout promise, and its conspicuous proximity to the elections, seem second only to the opportunism and unsophistication lurking behind his One Israel farce.

ed with his spacious, cozy, and remote cottage in well-to-do Kochav Yair and moved with Nava to a three-room flat on the third floor of the thistle-dipped, graffiti-splashed, urine-sprinkled seventh entrance of an endless shikun somewhere between Jerusalem's Katamonim and Tel Aviv's Hatikva neighborhoods; rent there would have been affordable for him.

Such leadership by example, besides resonating the IDF's noble *ahavat* ethos, would have left no doubt that Barak's passion for Israel's downtrodden is at least as fierce as David Ben-Gurion's was for the Negev, which the Old Man not only discussed extensively, but also made his home.

But Barak preferred to act verbally, and thus ended up meeting unarmed a sore loser like Adisu Messele in the dark alley into which he was maneuvered by the organizational dilettante he had hand-picked for party secretary-general, so as not to be threatened by an independent-minded talent.

Meimad, though an inversion of low-brow Geshet's street-wise cynicism, delivers to Barak's religious flank the same kind of blank bullets Levy will give him on the social front.

For one thing, Meimad voters were not headed in Bibi's direction. But more importantly, to complement his commendable confrontation of haredi draft-dodging and budget-gobbling, Barak should have actively sought a restoration of the so-called historic alliance between Labor and religious Zionism.

For a moment, when he went to Beit El during Yael Tzur's shiva after his wife's and child's murder by terrorists, Barak seemed headed in that direction. Unfortunately, it wasn't followed up.

Maybe now, with NRP leaders hining that the time may have come to change their waltz partner of 22 years, Barak can still rise to the occasion; not because doing so can bring him victory, but because that kind of axis is nationally indispensable if this society is to avert the civil war which ultra-secular zealots and tunnel-visioned haredim are busy preparing for us.

Yitzhak Rabin had the exceptional luck to head the IDF in '67, hold no office in '73, and lead Labor just when the Russian immigration would up the scale in its favor.

Barak, despite possessing all the higher education, musical talent, and eloquent Hebrew which Rabin so memorably lacked, has yet to display some of his gruff mentor's amazing luck; his One Israel gig can hardly substitute for that lack.

Get a hold of yourself 2 states now!

MEIR RONNEN

Dear Ms. Ragen, I'm neither your rabbi nor your shrink, but it strikes me that your anger is eating you up. First there was your September piece in *The Jerusalem Report*. The one that began with the pain and anguish of arriving at shul on Friday night - the one Nachshon Wachsmann prayed to - and finding the spray-painted slogan "Death to Dosim." As you contemplated what could have led a Jew in our land to echo the sentiments of Chmelnicki and Hitler, you suddenly remembered the haredim, and everything was clear. By the end, you too are shouting, "Go back to Williamsburg!"

(I trust the delicious irony of a new immigrant from Far Rockaway urging some whose families have been here since the early 1800s, when life in the land was not so easy, to go back to America did not escape you.)

The problem, it seems, was not that our young vandal spray-painted a shul, but that he got it wrong. (By the way, have you ever heard any words of hatred of haredim from Yehuda and Esther Wachsmann, whom you used to bolster your argument?)

And then there was your piece in this paper on last month's prayer gathering. You watched at least a quarter of a million people do nothing but recite psalms and selichot for two hours - words dear to both of us - and you were reminded of the Israelites dancing around the golden calf.

I don't have to remind a learned, religious woman like yourself that Moses did not break the tablets because the people had the "wrong idea," but only when he saw them dancing and realized that they built the golden calf to permit debauchery. Is that what you witnessed?

You write in that article of the haredim and "their" yeshivot. Are those yeshivot really so alien to you? When you see 3,000 students learning in the Mirrer Yeshiva, does nothing stir inside? Do you see only non-productive parasites? Is it not also one of Israel's great achievements that 50 years after all the great Torah centers of Europe were turned to ashes, they have been rebuilt on an unprecedented scale?

I keep coming back to the question: Why do you write like this? It

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

is not the money or fame. You have more than enough of both. You were quoted once as saying that "the haredim are not used to criticism," surely the funniest remark ever to pass your lips. Is that what you are doing, offering some constructive criticism?

The venues chosen - *Ha'aretz*, *The Jerusalem Report* - suggest not. And it must have occurred to

Are you trying to win over secular Israelis to modern Orthodoxy with the message: 'You can be religious and still hate haredim'

you that haredim, like most people, do not respond well to being screamed at or mocked.

Or are you trying to win over secular Israelis to modern Orthodoxy with the message: "You can be religious and still hate haredim." That message has overworked, and will not work now. You'll have to show them something a little more positive.

I HAVE no problem with your presenting your vision of Torah as powerfully as you can. I just don't think that the message is strengthened with the ubiquitous tag line "and not like the 'primitive,' or 'sheep-like' (or whatever other choice epithet you can think of) haredim." I would personally be thrilled if more secular Israelis were drawn to your committed, religious life. And if formulaic romance novels, with their inevitable beautiful and brilliant heroines - intended, no doubt, to suggest their creator - is the means of doing so, no problem.

But it must have galled you when you lived next door to Or Sameah to watch hundreds of products of the finest secular education drawn to Torah by rabbis in black suits and the warmth of haredi homes. Were they all oedipal, just sons?

Think of some of the most

important recent works on Torah: Jeremy Kagan's *The Jewish Self*, Dr. Akiva Taiz's *Living Inspired*, and *WorldMask*. These works have inspired and changed thousands of Orthodox Jews like you and me, and provided access to the depth of Torah to Jews with no background. Though these authors use their sophisticated, academic backgrounds to present Torah in a modern idiom, the Torah they teach is exclusively that which they received from rabbis you dismiss as primitive.

My guess is that you too were once powerfully drawn to the haredi world. Perhaps you saw there a certain intensity, or modesty, or simplicity, or commitment that you had not experienced before. I would guess that at some point you met a Jew like Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, who was born and died in the same tiny apartment in Sha'ar Heseid and yet was accompanied by his final resting place by 300,000 Jews of all types.

But somewhere along the way, you realized, as we all do eventually, that together with the exemplary souls nurtured in the haredi world are many ordinary ones and failures as well. You felt betrayed by the loss of your dream of human perfection. In place of the pure light you once sought, you now find only blackness and ugliness, forgetting that since Adam's sin the whole world is a mixture of light and dark.

It's too bad. You are blessed with talent and brains and passion. You can do better than vitriol, and you can do better than best-selling novels that tell your readers what they want to hear: that the haredi world is characterized only by stifled souls and dysfunction.

My childhood rabbi once explained why American Jews preferred Isaac Bashevis Singer's portrait of their ancestors to the elegies of Abraham Joshua Heschel. The Yiddish writer eased their consciences and told them what they wanted to hear: that their ancestors were as sex-obsessed and removed from holiness as they are.

I'm afraid that you have fallen into the same trap of providing an eager audience with a one-dimensional portrait of the haredi world. By doing so, you serve neither God nor His Torah nor yourself.

I never thought autonomy would work, so I have come to the conclusion that only a two-state solution is feasible. I'm even ready to divide Jerusalem and discuss a population exchange.

I mean, the city is virtually divided already isn't it? And there's a historical precedent, too. Remember the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel?

I'm all for a halachic Jewish state alongside a secular one. Borders would be closed only on Shabbat, as they are now.

A two-state solution would solve nearly all outstanding problems.

In the halachic state - let's call it Judah - all issues would be settled in religious courts. In Judah, the rabbinate would continue to oversee the recordings of births, deaths, and marriages. Religious councils would continue to be funded by the state, and yeshiva students would not be required to tender any form of public or security service.

Secular Jews could become citizens of Judah, but would of course be bound by its laws, as would temporary residents. The latter might even be hired as policemen or security guards, thus helping to solve the unemployment problem to the neighboring state of Israel.

Jews of all persuasions could become citizens of Israel, but would be bound by all its laws and obligations, from tax payment to army service. Exemptions would not exist. Neither would there be any recourse to a religious court. All births, deaths, and marriages, civil or rabbinical, would be registered by the Ministry of the Interior. Mixed marriages would also be registered.

Observant Jews, Moslems, and Christians living in the secular state of Israel would enjoy complete freedom of religion, but would be required to fund their own places of worship and schools, as in the United States. Burials would be undertaken by communities or private undertakers, each of whom would receive a set fee from the National Insurance Institute.

Both states would necessarily make some sacrifices. Israel would lose control over a great

part of Jerusalem, including the Western Wall, and many enclaves in Judea and Samaria. Israel might even be forced to acknowledge Bnei Brak as an independent enclave.

All this might lead to political repercussions, opening the way for Jerusalem Arab neighborhoods to become part of a Palestinian state, though again with open borders. Eventually, some sort of confederation might be possible.

Judah would have to make sacrifices, too. It would have to find its own budget to maintain its vast network of schools, yeshivot, and kashrut supervisors, as well as its own insurance and medical services. It might even save money by making its section of the Jerusalem municipality a state service. Funding would come from enthusiastic millionaires among the world Orthodox community and later from tourism and hi-tech projects, or from performing marriages for religious citizens of secular Israel. It's conceivable that formidable budget problems might force the state of Judah to privatize religious seminaries and make entry into them conditional on passing examinations and IQ tests.

For the first few years of the two new states, Israel would make considerable loans, on easy terms, to Judah, the money coming from freed sections of its budget. Judah could save money by not having a parliament or an air force.

All citizens of the present state of Israel would be free to choose which citizenship to pick, that of Judah or Israel. Residence need not at first be changed, but would require a permit. But *caveat emptor*: Citizens of either state would be bound by the laws of the state in which they reside. All the laws, without exception.

A two-state solution gives everyone the choice of how he wants to live, bow or not he wants to worship, what he wants to eat, when he wants to shop, and how he wants to dress. In Judah, everything would be totally still on Shabbat. In Israel, we befuddle the student who casts the first stone on a Saturday.

The more I think about this crazy idea, the more I like it. As the man said, if you want it badly enough, it is no dream.

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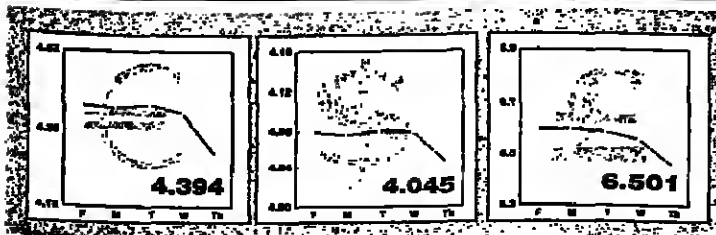
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Today's shekel



In brief

Average income up 2.2% in '98

Average monthly wages rose last year by 2.2 percent, to NIS 6,270, the Central Bureau of Statistics said yesterday. The number of salaried jobs stood by the end of '98 at 2,248 million. An additional 41,000 jobs were registered for Palestinian employees, whose inclusion in the overall average wage calculation would trim the average wage by NIS 50 to NIS 6,220. In the second half of the year the average income declined by 0.9%, the CBS said.

Jerusalem Post Staff

Dead Sea '98 net sales up 9% to NIS 2.05b.

Dead Sea Works net profit rose last year by 26% to NIS 207 million, the Israeli Chemicals subsidiary reported yesterday. Sales totaled NIS 2.05 billion last year, an 8.9% increase on the previous year's NIS 1.89b., the company said. Fourth quarter net profits soared 274% to NIS 43.1 million, in comparison with the previous year's NIS 11.5m.

Jerusalem Post Staff

December-February tax revenue up 3.2%

The government's income from taxes during the months of December-February rose by 3.2% to NIS 30.5b., the Treasury reported yesterday. Of this sum, NIS 16.5b. was collected through income and property taxes, while customs and value added taxes added NIS 13.2b., the Treasury said.

Jerusalem Post Staff

Delta 3 to provide Oman with Net phone services

Delta Three said it signed a contract with Oman's state telephone company to provide the Arab sultanate with telephone services over the Internet. Delta Three, a division of Bermuda-based RSL Communications Ltd., owned by cosmetics heir Ronald S. Lauder, said it will split revenues with the Omani government-run General Telecommunications Organization from Internet calling cards, direct-dial long-distance services and computer-to-telephone software. It declined to offer revenue projections for the service, which begins in April. The contract may open the door for Delta Three to expand to other Middle Eastern countries. It has already similar arrangements with telephone companies in Norway, Iceland and the Netherlands, and offers services directly to consumers in 26 other countries. Bloomberg

Aladdin buys software protection start-up

Aladdin Knowledge Systems has purchased the assets of Israeli software protection start-up Micro Macro Technologies (MMT) for \$700,000, it was announced Wednesday.

MMT, which was founded in 1995 and went into receivership earlier this year, is a leading vendor of token-based protection for Macintosh software developers. Its products include Microguard Plus, Microguard PC and Microguard USB. In 1998 MMT, which has offices in the US, Europe and Israel, saw estimated sales of \$1.4m. Tel Aviv-based Aladdin, which has recently repositioned itself as a provider of Internet and digital content security, aims to use the purchase to increase its customer base. MMT clients include industry leaders such as Adobe, Sciex, United Technologies, Pratt & Whitney, Northern Telecom, Kodak, Fuji and Agfa. "This acquisition is purely for market share," said Yanki Margalit, chairman and CEO of Aladdin. "We want to make their customers our customers. We don't expect to be interested in their technology but to serve their large customer base."

Jacob Vind, the president of Aladdin's software security unit, said the purchase of MMT is particularly timely since Apple has staged a turnaround in Mac sales since it introduced the iMac, and MMT has successfully penetrated the Mac market. He said the company intended to continue serving MMT's former clients.

Nicky Blackburn

Virginia seeks to boost trade ties

The US state of Virginia is planning a series of measures to boost trade relations with Israel's hi-tech industry.

Virginia, one of America's leading manufacturers of telecommunications and hi-tech products has established an advisory board to find ways to increase corporate, business and cultural cooperation between the two states. The board has nominated Zvi Yanai, from Shoval-Saar, a privately owned consultancy company, to represent the state in Israel. His activities include promoting economic ties between Virginia and Israel. In July a hi-tech Virginia-Israel business summit is to be held in Virginia, and in November Virginia's governor, James Gilmore, is to visit Israel.

Nicky Blackburn

Boeing to host 110 Israeli companies

Over 110 local defense and high-tech companies are scheduled to participate in a conference initiated by Boeing in Tel Aviv next week. The two-day conference, which begins Monday, is also being organized by the Authority for Industrial Cooperation. It is expected to draw over 600 participants. Boeing is in competition with Lockheed Martin to supply the Air Force with its next fighter jet.

Arieh O'Sullivan

Shoes sales down 25%

Sales of locally-produced shoes plunged 25 percent last year to NIS 463.5 million Oded Tira head of the Economic Division at the Manufacturers Association said yesterday. He added that 1998 was the worst year for local manufacturers in more than five years. Tira said that the decrease is a direct outcome of the economic slowdown and a rise in imports of cheap shoes from abroad. It was also a result of the fact that the IDF has started importing boots. At the same time shoe exports increased 1% to \$36.5m while imports rose 3% to \$175m.

Dan Gerstenfeld

UK summons US envoy in banana trade row

LONDON (Reuters) - British Trade Secretary Stephen Byers summoned the US ambassador yesterday to protest at what Britain said was a clear breach of world trade rules in the dispute over European Union banana imports.

Byers told parliament that Washington's action in requiring importers to post bonds to cover threatened 100 percent duties on a range of European goods, including British cashmere, was "irrational and unacceptable".

"I deplore the action which the United States has taken," he said. "It is completely unauthorized by any WTO (World Trade Organization) procedures."

Washington and Brussels have been at loggerheads for months over the EU banana regime, which the WTO has ruled unfairly favors small Caribbean producers against others in Latin America.

The EU has modified its regime in a way it hopes will satisfy the WTO. But without waiting to see whether a WTO panel would accept the modification, the

United States on Wednesday announced it required the bonds effective immediately. "This prejudices the panel ruling, and we believe is contrary to the WTO dispute settlement rules as the US is applying punitive measures unilaterally without authorization from the WTO," Byers said.

"I have summoned the [US Ambassador Philip Lader], and will make these points to him later this afternoon."

The US move provoked a storm of protest by British members of parliament of all parties. Left-wing Labour MP Diane Abbott accused Washington of "bully-boy tactics". Liberal Democrat Archie Kirkwood, whose Scottish constituency is at the heart of the cashmere industry, called the United States "our so-called ally."

Other legislators questioned whether it was a good time for Washington to take such action when British and US forces were cooperating in the skies over Iraq.

US Bancorp investment arm in strategic deal with Nessuah Zannex

By DAN GERSTENFELD

US Bancorp Piper Jaffray, the investment and retail brokerage arm of US Bancorp, is close to signing a strategic alliance agreement with local investment house Nessuah Zannex, sources close to the companies told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

The sources said that the agreement is expected to be announced in the next two weeks. Nessuah Zannex refused to comment on the report. Minneapolis-based Piper Jaffray, which was established 104 years ago, offers investment banking

and securities brokerage services through 89 offices in 17 states in the US. The investment bank offers mutual funds, securities brokerage, investment banking and asset management.

It is the latest of the US investment banks specializing in growth and technology to enter Israel. Other such banks have also opened representative offices here and formed strategic alliances with local firms. Hambrecht & Quist is represented here by Tamir Fishman, NationsBanc Montgomery Securities has an alliance agreement with local hi-

tech investment house Jerusalem Global, and Evergreen acts as the local affiliate of BancAmerica Robertson Stephens.

Nessuah Zannex intends to use the agreement to become more involved in the technology field in which it has currently almost no activity.

The company also intends to help local companies raise money in the US and become active in the mergers and acquisitions field. In addition, the investment firm intends to focus on the biotechnology and health care fields, which are not fully developed yet.

The source said that Nessuah realized that an agreement with a US investment bank is the best way to enter the booming hi-tech industry. He added that the agreement will give the firm access to research coverage of Piper's analysts who specialize in hi-tech, health care and biotech.

Piper Jaffray, which was involved in some 140 public offerings in the US last year, had no activities in Israel in the past and had been looking for a local partner. Following the company's acquisition by US Bancorp, it manages \$75 billion in assets. The firm employs 60 analysts

who cover more than 300 companies in the consumer, financial institutions, health care, industrial growth and technology industries.

Minneapolis-based US Bancorp is the 13th largest US bank. It acquired Piper Jaffray in 1998 for \$730 million and changed the company's name to US Bancorp Piper Jaffray earlier this month.

Nessuah Zannex was formed last year, from a merger between Nessuah Trading and Investment and Zannex Securities. The investment company is controlled by Proventus AB, a Stockholm-based investment and holding company.

Novell wages war on Israeli software piracy

By NICKY BLACKBURN

Computer giant Novell has declared war on software piracy in Israel with a \$250,000 campaign designed to identify and punish the resellers who are selling customers illegal copies, it was announced yesterday.

Novell, which sells about \$12 million worth of software here every year, loses a further \$10m, in sales annually as a result of software piracy, said Simon Swayle, Novell's investigator for the Europe, Middle East, and Africa region.

Swayle, who was in Tel Aviv to launch the campaign, said Israel, which is now facing the threat of trade sanctions from the US because of the high level of software piracy, is one of the worst offenders.

Every year international businesses lose an estimated \$170m, as a result of Israeli

counterfeiting, he said, quoting figures from the International Intellectual Property Alliance. This is a piracy rate of 55 percent, compared to the US, which has a piracy rate of less than 20%.

"This is a significant problem," said Swayle. "Because Israel is a relatively small market, software companies haven't done much about the problem here and as a result it's grown. In other parts of the world the problem has been managed."

As a result, he said, large and small businesses are seeing costs rise, profits decline and jobs lost. He added that it also has a detrimental effect on the amount of money companies can invest in R&D.

As part of the new end-user legitimization campaign, businesses across the country will receive letters from Novell asking them to supply the serial numbers of their systems.

In return Novell, which supplies network operating systems to about 80% of all local companies, will inform them whether or not the system is legal and whether it is compatible for the year 2000. If it isn't legal, then the user needs only to tell Novell where it bought the system and pay the price of an upgrade to receive product legitimization. The offer is open for a three-month period. "It's a no-pain operation," said Swayle. "We are not going to take any action against the customer. We want to target the resellers."

The 12-month campaign kicked off two weeks ago in the region around Beersheba, which Novell has identified as being one of the worst for piracy.

"Because it's in the periphery, people there think they aren't being watched, which leaves them open to temptation," said

Doron Dreyer, channel sales manager for Novell Israel. "It has a different social structure too, and the resellers are not always so honest there."

Some 8,000 businesses there have been targeted and Swayle anticipates responses from about 1,500. Already the company is planning to take legal action against two or three resellers in the Beersheba region. The campaign will spread to the rest of the country over the next six months.

Amir Rosentaler, general manager for Novell Israel, said that in the meantime "the company will not move into the second phase of business development here. All plans have been put on hold. It's very hard to convince the company to invest money here because they see they are losing money."

Novell is running similar campaigns in a number of other countries.



Rolls-Royce profits up

Rolls-Royce CEO John Rose poses in front of one of the company's engines in this undated file photo. Preliminary financial data for 1998, released yesterday, signaled an increase in pre-tax profits over the previous year.

(AP)

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Siemens AG	116.1	0.09	
Wolfsburg AG	15.02		
Wuppertal AG	87.1	0.19	
Gold 100 Oz Feat	Mar99	291.6	0.41
Silver Future	Mar99	5.28	0.65
Platinum Future	Apr99	373.5	0.24
Palladium Future	Mar99	248.0	0.57
Copper Future	Mar99	0.52	0.0
Gold Futures	Lo	293.7	0.02
Gold Futures	Lo	297.7	0.0
Silver	Lo	5.22	-3.79

Mos

Moshe Arens: There is no magic solution

The third-time defense minister tells Arie O'Sullivan and Amotz Asa-El that for him, the debate over Lebanon boils down to just one question: What will best protect Israeli civilians living in the north?

Moshe Arens has just returned from the funeral of Brig.-Gen. Erez Gerstein, killed in Lebanon on Sunday with two soldiers and a reporter. He is still wearing his blue wind-breaker.

Outside his office Purim fireworks light up the skies of Tel Aviv. A secretary, dressed as a clown, trots down the hall. It's a surreal scenario. But it is hardly as bizarre as the thought of Moshe Arens sitting for a record third time as minister of defense.

He's been in the office for 37 days and has obviously put little thought into decorating. The shelves are mostly empty except for a few model airplanes, and about the only sign that this technocrat has taken over is a signed photograph of Menachem Begin on the desk.

When Arens first took over the Defense Ministry in February 1983, the IDF, deployed in Beirut and along the Shouf mountains, was suffering heavy casualties. Public pressure was escalating for a pullout.

Arens responded by redeploying IDF forces back to the Awali River, but it was not until Yitzhak Rabin took over from him in 1985 that Israel withdrew to the present borders of the security zone. The sense of déjà vu is enormous.

Today, shown two editorials calling for Israel to quit the security zone, Arens appears indifferent. "The decisions that have to be taken in this office should not be taken under pressure," he says.

Arens dismisses the idea of embarking on a major military operation in Lebanon, as Shimon Peres did prior to the 1996 elections. "I think the Grapes of Wrath is one of the things which lost Mr. Peres the election," he says.

"There is a legitimate debate as to what the right thing to do is. I said at Erez Gerstein's funeral that the people involved in this debate should not ignore the fact that we

have thousands of soldiers and officers doing the day-to-day work in Lebanon, risking their lives. You have to think a little bit about the effect on them as well," Arens says.

"We have a number of options in Lebanon, one of which is to leave. Some people expect that when we leave everything will be hunky-dory. I don't say that the probability of that happening is zero - but it certainly is not 100 percent."

"You've got the other side of the coin. Hizbullah does not get any indication from Syria that they have to stop, and civilians as well as soldiers are hurt. The result is a war."

AS Arens sees it, Israel has four options regarding Lebanon:

- unilateral withdrawal;
- continuing the Grapes of Wrath understandings;
- dropping the Grapes of Wrath limitations and using the might of the Israeli army;
- telling the Syrians to take the Golan Heights and call off the Hizbullah in return.

'We have a number of options in Lebanon - one is to leave. Some people expect that when we leave everything will be hunky-dory'

of returning the Golan to Syria is obviously not one to be chosen during his tenure.

Before taking over as defense minister, Arens criticized Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government for not treating Lebanon like a real war, "la guerre, comme à la guerre" as he put it. He called the Grapes of Wrath understandings a "strait-jacket," and suggested that the Syrians were using their Hizbullah proxy with impunity and that Israel should follow the Turkish example.



Arens is emphatic that Lebanon isn't Israel's Vietnam, and he isn't LBJ.

(Gideon Markowicz)

"I am convinced that the Syrians are behind everything that is happening there. Nothing happens in Lebanon if the Syrians don't want it to happen. It is only the Syrians who can call off the Hizbullah," he says.

"I am convinced that the understandings that were reached after the Grapes of Wrath operation were bad for the IDF because, in large measure, they tie the IDF's hands and won't allow it to use its full capability and provide a large degree of immunity to the Hizbullah."

Would Israel abandon the understandings? It is, Arens says, "a possibility amongst a number of options."

"Changing something that has been agreed on is not a simple matter," Arens says. "Even though it may not be an agreement that was registered at the United Nations, it is an agreement with an international flavor to it."

"The understandings create a situation where Hizbullah is free to launch attacks against Israeli and SLA soldiers and outposts in the security zone, and we are not free to attack their bases which are in the villages. That is an asymmetry, which I think everybody realizes makes it very difficult for the IDF."

Arens is bewildered by Labor leader Ehud Barak's commitment to pull the IDF out of Lebanon by June 2000, calling it an election ploy.

"I have a great deal of respect for him - as I must have, since I appointed him chief of general staff," Arens says, smiling. But he adds that as chief of staff, Barak never came to him to carry out major changes in Lebanon.

"I'd say if you know how to get out of there in a year, why don't you find out how to get out of there in a day? There is no magic solution," Arens says. "Everybody involved,

my predecessor Itzik Mordechai, the present chief of staff, his predecessor Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, his predecessor Ehud Barak were all of the opinion - at least until they changed their mind this week - that unilateral withdrawal was a bad idea and that we had no choice but to continue with our present situation in the area."

THE defense minister steadfastly refuses to draw any similarities between Israel's war against Shi'ite guerrillas in Lebanon and America's war in Vietnam.

"There is no analogy. It is an entirely different story," Arens told *The Jerusalem Post*.

"Vietnam is... how many miles from the United States? Thousands of miles. The civilian population of the US could not be affected by Vietnam. The Vietnamese were not attacking the people of California or Alaska or Idaho, or Louisiana. There is no

analogy whatsoever," Arens says.

"For me as minister of defense there is only one question: What is the best way of providing protection to the civilian population living in their own country? That is a question that LBJ [US president Lyndon Baines Johnson] never ever had to face in the United States. It is an entirely different story," Arens reiterates.

Arens says he told the Americans: Israel is "sitting on a powder keg" in Lebanon. He has close relations with the Washington administration and met Monday night with US Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat in his Tel Aviv office.

The American told Arens that the US has been pleased with the Defense Ministry's economic policy toward the Palestinians - a policy Arens inherited. However, Eizenstat complained about the closure of the territories Arens imposed this week, the first since

August. Israeli defense officials have also quietly criticized the closure that Arens imposed against the recommendations of OC Central and Southern Commands.

"The man still thinks it's 1991," said one Defense Ministry official, who asked not to be named.

Arens, who during his last tenure as defense minister from June 1990 to July 1992 adamantly refused to meet with the exiled Palestinian leadership, has yet to meet with the Palestinian leadership. Since Mordechai's dismissal, the peace negotiations with the PA have been taken over by Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon.

"None have asked to meet with me. I have stated publicly that I have no objection to meeting with them. If you want to place bets, you will probably find that in the next week or so I will meet with some Palestinians," says Arens.

See ARENS, Page 17

Where have all the flowers gone?

The public heartache over the recent fatalities in Lebanon will fade - until the next time, writes David Rudge

Within a week, the flowers on the freshly covered graves will have started to wilt and the headlines in the press, on the television and radio news will no doubt be once more focusing on the upcoming Knesset elections.

The heartache and anger over the deaths of Brig.-Gen. Erez Gerstein, his veteran driver Chief Warrant Officer Imad Abu Rish, radio operator Sgt.-Sgt. Omer Alkabetz and Israel Radio's northern reporter Ilan Roeh, will ease with the passage of time - until the next fatality.

Unfortunately, the likelihood that there will be a next time is more a probability than a possibility because that is the reality in south Lebanon, and has been the case for more than two decades.

That is not Hizbullah propaganda, nor is it part of the psychological war that the organization is waging, with more than a modicum of success, to try and influence public opinion in Israel and undermine the morale of IDF and South Lebanese Army troops.



Israeli commandos open fire during a training session: At their head, wearing a bandanna, is Maj. Eitan Balahsan, who was killed in Lebanon last week, along with two other paratroopers officers.

Unit were killed in a Hizbullah ambush and five soldiers were wounded.

The public debate over what is euphemistically described as the "Lebanon problem" is, therefore, likely to continue to a varying degree - depending on events on the ground in the bloodstained Land of the Cedars.

FOR the Four Mothers movement, the issue is crystal clear - to extricate "the boys" from the Lebanese

quagmire as quickly and painlessly as possible.

Members of the Four Mothers, as well as MK Yossi Beilin, who heads the Movement for a Peaceful Withdrawal from Lebanon, believe that northern communities can be protected as well, if not better, from the international border rather than from the security zone.

They are further convinced that the IDF is now primarily involved in defending the troops deployed

in the zone from Hizbullah's increasing attacks, rather than in safeguarding northern residents.

The security zone, they contend, may have prevented infiltrations, but it has blatantly failed to stop Katyusha rockets or mortar rounds falling on Kiryat Shmona and other towns and villages adjacent to the Lebanese border.

Operation Accountability in 1993 was designed to punish Hizbullah for shelling Galilee, while sending a message to the Lebanese govern-

ment and indirectly in the Syrians that Israel would not tolerate attacks on its territory, or the losses being inflicted on IDF and SLA troops in the zone.

The lull in the cross-border bombardments was only temporary, leading to Operation Grapes of Wrath in 1996 at the end of which an attempt was made to agree on "rules of the game" in the south Lebanese arena that would keep civilians on both sides out of the fighting.

There are those who maintain that the Grapes of Wrath understandings have not achieved the desired result. Katyusha rockets and mortar shells continue to threaten Galilee communities and their residents, while the IDF and the SLA are still suffering casualties from roadside bombs, long-range fire and ambushes.

"I go out to work either before or after the Katyusha rockets have fallen and sometimes I travel along routes close to where they have struck moments before, or where they strike a few minutes later," said Rachel Ben-Dor, chairperson and founder of the Four Mothers movement.

"There is always the fear that I might be hit by a rocket, and all this at the time that the politicians and generals are saying that our

soldiers are in south Lebanon in order to protect us, the residents of the north. If that is not a paradox, I don't know what is," she said.

BEN-DOR, unlike some, does not deride the Grapes of Wrath understandings, and not because the IDF is in the security zone. We know exactly when to expect Katyusha rocket or mortar attacks - whenever there have been civilian casualties on the Lebanese side as a result of fighting in south Lebanon.

See FLOWERS, Page 17

Elections

The polling power of One

Opposition leader Ehud Barak created the "One Israel" Knesset ticket for one reason: to attract voters who would not support him for prime minister if he were heading a ticket named "Labor Party."

Labor's central committee last night approved the One Israel ticket – which is Labor plus Geshet and Meimad – so now the question is: Will Barak's calculation prove out in the May 17 election, and in the likely runoff on June 1?

The inclusion of Geshet leader David Levy as No. 3 on the One Israel list – behind Barak and Shimon Peres – is intended to draw Mizrahim (Jews of North African and Asian origin) who have traditionally seen Labor as an Ashkenazi, elitist, socialist, leftist party that looked down on them.

The addition of Meimad is meant to convince moderate Orthodox voters that the Labor Party really does value Jewish tradition. Meimad gets a safe Knesset seat (probably for Rabbi Michael Melchior) and a ministry (probably for Prof. Avi Ravitzky) in a Barak-led government.

If dropping the Labor label and adding a Mizrahi and an Orthodox party aren't concessions enough, Barak and his lieutenants are even considering changing Labor's traditional ballot symbol – the Hebrew letters alef-mem-taf, an acronym forming the word "emet," "truth" – to something else.

Something else that just might make voters forget that they're casting a ballot for the Labor Party.

"There are many, many layers of Israeli society where the idea of voting Labor is unthinkable. These people just have a mental block against it," explained Yitzhak Herzog, a senior adviser to Barak who negotiated the legal side of the coalition agreements with Geshet and Meimad. Barak, Herzog said, believes One Israel can break through that mental block.

The strategy is not only for Levy and Meimad to bring along their faithful followers, but that they – along with the name change from Labor to One Israel – will give the ticket a brand-new image in the eyes of the general public.

Can Ehud Barak's One Israel coalition break through the mental block that makes voting Labor anathema to many Israelis? Larry Derfner investigates

"In One Israel, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," said Herzog.

YET activists involved with One Israel's chief target populations – Mizrahim and moderate Orthodox – are doubtful that Labor's new look will have much impact.

Danny Tamari, secretary-general of the moderate Hachibutz Hadati (religious kibbutz movement) noted that most Meimad supporters are dovish and would have voted for Barak anyway, certainly in a runoff against Netanyahu. Putting Meimad on the One Israel list, he said, was a matter of convincing the already convinced.

"Aside from Meimad supporters, there are a certain number of Orthodox voters who fall somewhere between Meimad and the National Religious Party who might find it slightly easier now to vote for Barak. But the number of such voters is insubstantial," he said.

Asked why Labor MK Avraham Burg, who wears a kippa and is the son of NRP patriarch Josef Burg, doesn't do what Meimad is expected to do – bring in modern Orthodox votes – Tamari replied, "Burg doesn't identify himself with religious issues that are of concern to religious voters."

Yet Herzog insisted that Burg and Meimad were two separate issues. "Burg is one individual. Meimad is an entire movement. With Meimad, One Israel can appeal to any voter who has a spark of Jewish tradition in his heart," he maintained.

Tamari estimated that the Meimad gambit had moved him a centimeter or so closer to Barak, but no more.

"I will find it difficult to vote for Barak, as I will find it difficult to vote for Netanyahu. I'm going to wait and see before deciding," he said.

DR. YOSHI Dahan, a founder of

the Mizrahi social movement Keshet ("Rainbow"), was even more skeptical about One Israel's chances with Mizrahim.

"David Levy and Geshet will have minimal, if any, impact on Mizrahi voters. Levy is no longer seen as an 'authentic, socially oriented, grassroots Mizrahi' – or whatever they're being called these days," said Dahan, a senior researcher at Tel Aviv's Adva Center, a socially progressive think tank.

"In the last few years Levy has come to be seen mainly as an opportunist; his jump to One Israel only adds to that impression," he said.

Levy and Geshet have fallen off the electoral popularity charts. No reliable poll has shown them getting a single Knesset seat. Their ultimate humiliation came in the last mayoral election when Levy's son, Jacky, lost to Labor-aligned candidate Pini Kahalo in the family's hometown, Beit She'an.

"If Levy had any real pull left, he would run Geshet as an independent party in the Knesset race, but he's not," Dahan noted.

Herzog, however, insisted that Levy brought stature to One Israel – not only as a historic leader of the Mizrahi battle for respect and equality, but also "as a dominant figure in Israeli politics for the last 25 years."

The prime-ministerial candidate who does have the sort of appeal Levy once enjoyed, Dahan said, is Center Party leader Yitzhak Mordechai.

He added: "Had the Labor Party built One Israel around MK Shlomo Ben-Ami [a Moroccan-born social democrat who finished first in the party primaries], it might have worked."

"But to change the Labor Party's image, you have to change it from the top down, and Ehud Barak is still seen as the symbol of the

Ashkenazi elite."

BEN-AMI, the chief ideologue of Labor's attempt to reach new constituencies, has argued that Levy not only raises the standing of Barak and One Israel, he also serves as an indictment of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Likud.

"Levy is a reminder that the Likud has lost its heart – its concern for the poor," Ben-Ami says.

As for dropping the Labor Party tag and replacing it with the all-inclusive, unity-minded One Israel, Dahan said Mizrahim saw through this.

"It's bullshit. They feel like Labor is trying to manipulate them again," he said.

Prof. Yairiv Ben-Eliezer knows something about repackaging a Labor Party ticket and winning an election. He was campaign adviser to Labor MK Haim Ramon and the "Ran" list in their 1994 victory in the Histadrut elections.

Ben-Eliezer, a media expert at Tel Aviv's College of Management, said the One Israel strategy has the potential to pay off "if [Barak] exploits it with good political propaganda."

The right message, he said, is that Labor is no longer linked with the "stigmatized" Meretz, as it was in the 1996 election, but with Mizrahim and the modern Orthodox.

"This changes the positioning of the party," said Ben-Eliezer, speaking in marketing terms that sounded perfectly appropriate for the subject. "Whether this can be translated into an electoral success is the \$64,000 question."

ADDING Geshet and Meimad to Labor's Knesset list means that most Laborites on the ticket will be pushed down a few places. Candidates in the vicinity of slot No. 30 – generally considered the limit of One Israel's electoral potential – are furious at the prospect that outsiders could elbow them out of contention for the Knesset.

The fear is that a loss of campaign enthusiasm among these backbenchers – a number of whom are Mizrahim with strong ties to the "grass roots" – will cost Barak many voters, and likely cancel out the new voters that Geshet and Meimad could bring in.

Ben-Eliezer doesn't think this will happen. "Nobody in Labor is being pushed out, only pushed down a little. But if the One Israel idea works, candidates further down the list will also get elected. This will provide a big incentive for the Labor candidates who got pushed down the list to work extra hard in this campaign," he said.

The mold for One Israel – not to mention for the countless other "non-partisan" lists that have recently entered Israeli politics – was struck in the late 1960s by former Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek.

A Labor Party stalwart, Kollek led his "One Jerusalem" list to victory after victory in city elections until 1993, when he was unseated by Ehud Olmert (running, naturally, at the head of a non-partisan list). Kollek, 88, said he faced the same situation in Jerusalem then



To many Mizrahim, Ehud Barak is still the symbol of the Ashkenazi elite.



Kollek (left): One Israel's appeal will be similar to One Jerusalem's; Prof. Yairiv Ben-Eliezer: The One Israel strategy has the potential to pay off if Barak 'exploits it with good political propaganda.'



that Barak faces now on a national level.

"The Labor Party was not liked in Jerusalem," Kollek noted. "One Jerusalem was different and new." The ticket's appeal was not to the religious, he pointed out, but rather to Jerusalemites who had simply "grown tired of Labor. One

Jerusalem brought them back home."

Kollek said he has been helping organize parlor meetings for One Israel's campaign, and noted that a number of long-time Likudniks have shown up. But he forecasted that One Israel's appeal would be similar to that of One Jerusalem –

the ticket wouldn't so much attract new voters to Labor as it would recapture its traditional constituency.

In other words, Kollek said, "Barak will get the votes of a lot of people who, if he were running with the Labor Party, would just stay home."



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FOR THE WEEK OF

March 12-14, 1999

by Michael Goldberg

and Howard Rosenberg

Author for People's

Public etc. Press

Levy's role as kosher stamp

Barak has embraced David Levy to prove he is serious about mending fences with underprivileged Israelis. Danna Harman looks at what each side has to gain from the union

Down the road and around the corner from the office used by Labor Party strategists, past the garages on Rehov Hamasger and the hip cafes on Rehov Yehonatan, is a red apartment building.

The sign on the door says Geshet Party Headquarters, but the rooms inside are deserted. The sound of an afternoon talk show wafts out of the radio; a telephone rings unanswered.

Looks, of course, are often deceiving - for it is here that one of the linchpins of the new One Israel holds court.

In a small side office, behind a closed door, Geshet leader MK David Levy is discussing the final fine points of the Geshet-Labor agreement with a Labor party lawyer.

As of last night, the union was final. And after the Moroccan immigrant from Beit She'an with 26 years of Knesset experience officially adds his weight to Ehud Barak's campaign, Labor campaign strategists will heave a sigh of relief and begin planning the David Levy media blitz.

The question is, how significant will his influence be?

More than 20 heads of Geshet branches who last month moved over to the Center Party announced they were returning to the Likud this week. Others have said they would not support Labor even if Levy signed on to One Israel.

But Levy promises that most of his thousands of activists and over 40,000 registered members will follow him into One Israel.

"Many of these people have gone a long way with me," says Levy, taking off his black sports jacket and leaning forward over the worn desk. "While there are a handful that won't join me, they will go to the Center Party or the Likud or wherever - this is certainly not the majority."

"For every person who has left Geshet to return to the Likud, I can find you 100 disappointed Likud voters looking for an alternative."

It is true, admits Levy, that most Geshet voters initially came from the Right - but this does not mean they are not open to change.

"Psychologically, some may have difficulty voting for Barak," he admits. "But, none of them are far Right, and in any case I have made it clear that we are not becoming Laborites here, rather simply creating a bloc with Labor."

"I would not have done it any other way. We will retain our independence. My supporters know that."

In the hour-long interview, Levy stresses Geshet's independence five times, the same number of times that he repeats the story that Netanyahu reneged on promises made to Geshet.

With reports of more Geshet supporters contemplating a return to the Likud or a move to the Center Party every day, Levy knows he must assuage his supporters' fears about joining what they perceive to be a left-wing party that treated them badly in the past, and play to their sense of pride by pointing out how badly they were treated, more recently, by the Likud.

"There is no doubt that the scars

of the 1950s are still there. I myself carry those scars," says Levy. "But this does not mean that people are blind."

"Now, when we see that the Likud has changed and has not come through with its promises, we are willing to look elsewhere."

"I am not talking about the diehard fools, of whom there are far fewer than you may think; I am talking about the rational majority. No one is a prisoner of the Likud party. People are going to make their decisions as people who are fed up, not as Likud automatons."

THE Israeli public is worried, says Levy, fearful for the future.

"People keep asking what will be tomorrow. They see their friends unemployed, they know it could soon be them. They have real questions about what is going on here."

"Parents are worried that they won't be able to support their children. This is what will influence them when they come to vote."

In 1992, Levy says, he already saw the writing on the wall.

"The Likud had already begun to take its supporters for granted. It was said then that if a person went into the polling booth and picked up any ticket other than Likud, his hand would start to tremble."

"Well, obviously that trembling is getting less and less," says Levy.

"Today, we all know and feel there are no big differences between the parties, so we are looking for sensitivity and credibility. We are interested in advancing our social needs."

"One Israel is the only alternative. The situation in the country is so bad that we find ourselves stuck on every front, so it is not all that hard to convince people that we need a change." When I left the government I said this was a government going nowhere. Little did I know just how well I had hit the nail on the head," he says, with a chuckle.

Behind the bravado, however, it is clear that making the move across the political spectrum was not so easy for Levy. In December, almost a year after he dramatically stepped down as foreign minister, he started negotiating a return to the government with Netanyahu.

But after it became clear that the prime minister would not give him the finance portfolio, Levy called it a day.

"I do sometimes miss the Likud," he admits. "Not the Likud of today, but what it once was."

"I miss the party that was a home for me, that had principles, hope and a vision of social equality. It was the Likud that started all the neighborhood rehabilitation programs."

"People began believing in the country under the Likud. Community centers were set up in development towns. Suddenly there were libraries, tennis courts, better schools. We felt like we were on the way to somewhere - and then it was abandoned."

AND even if, as many political pundits argue, Geshet supporters won't be voting for Barak en masse, Levy - as a symbol - is still a good catch for Labor. Barak knows what he is buying.

Even if the polls show that Levy brings in practically no votes at all, Barak still gains social and ethnic legitimacy.

With Levy on board, Barak can present himself to the Sephardi electorate as someone who has changed his ways.

In public, Labor officials maintain that Levy can bring in over 100,000 votes. In private, the estimates are far lower.

"If he can bring in 20,000 or 30,000 of his supporters that will be good," says one chief strategist. "We read that as worth two seats."

In conversations behind closed doors, however, the strategists admit that Levy will probably not bring in even 20,000 votes. "He doesn't have much real electoral pull nowadays. He doesn't have the people, he doesn't have the organization. He has never run a campaign and the Geshet bids for the Histadrut and the municipalities were both big failures. He is seen as an opportunist," was one gloomy assessment.

Charles Leiman, a professor of political science at Bar-Ilan University, agrees with this assessment and thinks Labor is making a mistake.

"Levy is not bringing a real dowry from Geshet. He has become a symbol of the oppressed Sephardi, but in reality he no longer represents them," says Leiman. "I think Labor has made a major blunder by bringing him in now. They are in a rush to create this One Israel body... but they will find that Levy's followers are not willing to follow him into the party."

"Labor is a dirty word to many of those supporters."

So why all the planning, strategizing and wooing of Geshet? "He is our kosher stamp, our way to prove that we are serious about repairing relations with the Sephardim," said a senior strategist.

"He may not bring in votes, but votes will come to us because of him. It makes us look better to have him on board, and will bring in wavering. He will lessen the aversion held by many in the Sephardi community to Labor."

Geshet also brings Labor its NIS 4 million fund for campaign financing, and it will bring more TV time as well - an extra six minutes for the party and three minutes for each MK.

Levy, not surprisingly, rejects the notion that his electoral weight lies only in his being Sephardi.

"We never described ourselves as an ethnic party, despite the fact that among our supporters the majority are Mizrahi. It is a fact

ment before him and nods his head briskly.

Levy gets three seats for his people, and has been promised a top ministerial position if Barak wins - the agreement also sets out the principles of the One Israel movement.

Levy feels that his voice has been heard and the matters he cares most about -

social justice and equality - have been given sufficient weight on the party platform. He points out passages on free education, reads out loud the section about setting social priorities, and underlines the part about working to close the socioeconomic gaps.

At the Geshet convention this coming Sunday, Levy plans talk to his supporters about the benefits of joining with Labor.

He has invited Barak to attend, and hopes Geshet will give him a warm reception.

"Look, I am not a dictator," he says. "I bring up the matters for discussion, and anyone can express his opinion. He can disagree, but I think the majority is with me."

"Many are applauding this union - they think that this may move us out of the sorry situation we are in. And, importantly, we will never forget that when we went with the Likud they broke agreements with us - written agreements."

"This is neither forgotten nor forgiven. For Geshet, the Likud is passed. There is no looking back."

Levy promises most of his Geshet activists and over 40,000 registered members will follow him into One Israel - something Labor officials privately doubt.

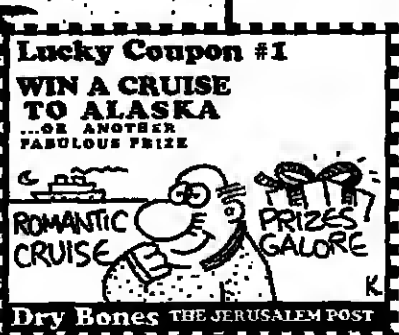
that in the Knesset we always worked for the universal, not for just one sector.

"We are an asset to Labor because we are a symbol of social change and we are accountable."

not because we are Sephardim," argues Levy. "This is not about bringing in Moroccans. It is about changing the flavor of the party."

The 62-year-old Levy looks down at the Geshet-Labor docu-

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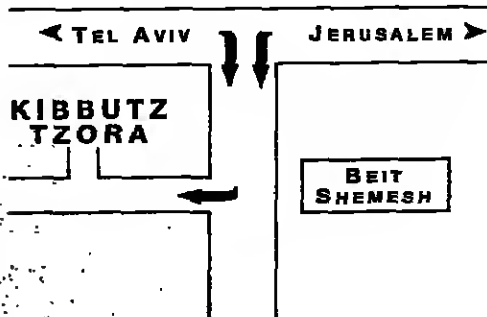
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Elections

#

ARENS

Continued from Page 13

He has never met Yasser Arafat, but says he's prepared to meet him too, though "it's not my heart's desire. I don't stay awake at night, you know, wishing that first thing in the morning, I'm going to have the chance to meet with him."

ARENS opposed the Camp David Accords but later, as ambassador to the US, defended Israel's position. He criticized Netanyahu and challenged him for the leadership, only to take on the task as defense minister when he lost.

He has been a virulent critic of the Oslo Accords and of the Wye agreement.

Yet he is adamant that Israel should honor its signed commitments, provided the Palestinians honor their part of the deal.

"The sum total of the commit-

ments that [the Palestinians] have undertaken are not being honored," Arens says. "That is the reason today that the whole thing is in limbo. And everyone accepts the fact that until the elections, there isn't going to be anything more."

When Arens took over as Defense five weeks ago, there were Jewish settlers who hoped they were in for a period of expansion. But Arens quickly told them that he would not allow any illegal settlement activity. He also wouldn't say whether he believed settlements such as those in the Gaza Strip would be uprooted in a permanent arrangement.

"What I do believe is that we are entering a period in which the permanent borders of the State of Israel are going to be established. That is the reason it is so important for the Likud to win the election."

"The Likud should lead the government that will determine the

permanent borders of the State of Israel rather than the Labor Party," Arens says.

"Settlements that have been established are going to play a very significant role," he adds, noting the existence of Ma'aleh Adumim and its impact on the borders around Jerusalem.

"Settlements play an important role in determining where Israel's permanent borders are going to be, and that is something I do have in the back of my mind when questions of permits for building and so forth come to my desk," Arens says.

"I don't think it is a question of more settlements; but, for example, I am all for Ma'aleh Adumim growing. Ariel growing."

A Likud stalwart, even Arens himself sees the establishment of a Palestinian state on the horizon. "It's not far away. But I don't mean to minimize the difference between what they have today and a state... There is quite a big step

between what they have today and a definition of a state."

Arens appears hell-bent on leaving his mark. But where is he likely to succeed in making an impact, and where will he be a mere caretaker?

For Arens, assuming control of the Defense Ministry, even for the period before the elections, is important.

"Four months is Israel's defense is a very, very long time. If we needed any reminder, we got it this past week. We had decisions to take on a daily basis."

ARENS returns to the Defense Ministry at a time when many things are coming to fruition, like the reorganization in the IDF, the culmination of the review of Israel's strategic doctrine. He insists that having done the job twice in the past he doesn't need to "learn the ropes."

"I have a reputation for being a reformer, and I have some very

clear-cut ideas of what's right and what's wrong," he says. "There are a number of things I want to do; if I don't manage to do them, you will find a very frustrated man here."

"[Israel] is too slow in making the adjustments to fit the changing surroundings. You have to adjust - if you don't, you are in trouble," Arens says.

One area in which he wants to make strides is in protecting Israel's skies from surface-to-surface missiles beyond the capabilities provided by the Arrow 2 anti-ballistic missile. He refuses to elaborate.

It's 8 p.m., and the 73-year-old Arens is winding down. In the morning he'll be heading for the Golan Heights and a tour of army bases.

"I feel in as good a shape as I was 20 years ago. I've got a little more experience under my belt. Maybe I'm a little wiser than I used to be too," he says.

Dry Bones



GRAPEVINE BY GREER FAY CASHMAN

FLOWERS

Continued from Page 13

"If the IDF were not there, the fighting would stop because Hizbullah says, if we can take them at their word, that it is fighting against the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon."

"The international community, I'm sure, would also take a different view of the situation if we pulled back to the international border and were no longer on Lebanese territory."

"It has been proven time and again that battles and wars have not solved anything. The Lebanon War resulted in the ousting of the Palestinians, with whom we are now holding negotiations. A lot of bloodshed could have been prevented if those talks had begun earlier."

"The Lebanon War, however, also created a new problem - Hizbullah - and aroused the hostility of local residents against us. How much more blood will have to be spilled before there is a dialogue to resolve this?" she asks.

Ben-Dor, a veteran resident of the north who now lives in Rosh Pina, initiated the Four Mothers movement shortly after the helicopter disaster in February 1997 in which 73 IDF soldiers, officers and airmen were killed.

She said the movement now has the support of thousands of people, including politicians from all parties, even Shas, retired military personnel, bereaved parents and those whose sons have served in Lebanon and returned home safely.

"THERE are many former officers, including generals, as well

as officers serving today who believe that the security zone and the concept behind it are not only ineffective but also dangerous," said Ben-Dor.

She maintained that members of the movement are not promoting unilateral withdrawal as the sole option. Neither do they hold the view that the solution lies only with Syria.

"The solution is to begin the process of negotiations, for when there are talks, there is less shooting, and the sooner the talks begin the better."

"If, however, the political leaders on all sides are incapable of halting the fighting and beginning talks, then we will have to press for international elements, like the Americans, to enter the scene and really put pressure on the sides to negotiate," she said.

"This is being done in Bosnia and other trouble spots. Why not in the Middle East? If indeed Syria does hold the key, there are ways and means of forcing it to accept an agreement that would enable an IDF withdrawal. When President Clinton threw his weight into the Wye Plantation talks, an agreement was reached."

"I have seen the politicians running from one bar mitzva, brit mila, wedding, and from one meeting to another, in order to keep their seats in the Knesset. If that much energy was devoted to solving the Lebanon problem, I'm sure it would be solved."

"For our part, we will continue to struggle with all the means at our disposal, in Israel and abroad, to press for our soldiers to be pulled out of south Lebanon. I know there has been criticism that the public debate has a demoralizing

effect on the soldiers, but we live in a democracy, unlike in some neighboring countries, and we will continue to make our voices heard," said Ben-Dor.

THE debate over Lebanon cuts across party lines and for that reason, as well as the security aspect, the issue was until recently kept



Labor MK Ephraim Sneh: 'We could subtly react by hitting Syria's economic interests in Lebanon.'

(Isaac Harari)

out of the election campaign. That has changed in light of the recent heavy losses.

Despite that, Labor MK Ephraim Sneh strictly adheres to what is seen as the "establishment line," which is diametrically opposed to unilateral withdrawal. He insists that, despite the pain and sense of loss, there are no

easy solutions to the Lebanon problem.

Sneh (Brig.-Gen., reserves) was the IDF's commander in south Lebanon in 1981-82, the same position held by Brig.-Gen. Erez Geisler, until his untimely death.

He has closely monitored the situation there ever since and as a minister in the government of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, he made regular trips to the security zone to meet with IDF and SLA officers and soldiers, as well as residents of south Lebanon.

At one stage he volunteered for a stint of reserve duty at the Ishiyeh outpost, a known hot-spot, in the north eastern sector of the zone.

Sneh maintains that proponents of unilateral withdrawal, including his own Labor party colleague Yossi Beilin, are "selling illusions."

"I'm in favour of bilateral withdrawal, by which I mean that if the IDF pulls out, Hizbullah would also be out. To withdraw from Lebanon without agreements that would provide that there would be no hostile militias along our northern border would be totally irresponsible," said Sneh.

He stressed that if Hizbullah or any other organization hostile to Israel, including Palestinian rejectionist groups or other factions, were in a position to reach the hills overlooking the northern border they could easily fire across at anything or anyone on the Israeli side.

To try and identify, locate and punish the perpetrators would then be even more difficult than at present because it would mean launching an incursion into Lebanon, which could prove even more costly.

The idea of an international force being deployed in south Lebanon to ensure security on both sides of the international border is also a self-deception, according to Sneh.

"The government's decision to accept UN resolutions 425 and 426 is meaningless because it is based on two false notions - that there is an independent Lebanese government and, secondly, that an international force would be capable of containing guerrillas," he said.

"Even if the soldiers in such an international force had all the professional skills, they would still lack the motivation to contain guerrillas determined to hit Israel or the IDF."

"We know just how important motivation is in the fight against guerrillas. To lie on your stomach on a winter's night in an ambush in Lebanon and remain alert in order to intercept an Hizbullah squad or to chase after them through rocky and tough terrain requires a great deal of motivation."

"The soldiers in UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon], for

instance, are very nice and very friendly," said Sneh. "They are probably good soldiers to defend their own countries, of that I have no doubt. But to defend us? They lack the motivation. The idea of an international force is an illusion we can't afford to toy with."

SNEH also ruled out the proposal, which is reportedly to be brought before the security cabinet next week, for the establishment of a narrower security zone, two or three kilometers wide, which would be easier to patrol but still give the IDF room to maneuver and chase after infiltrators, if necessary.

Such a move, he maintained, would send a negative message to the SLA and could bring about the collapse of Israel's ally in south Lebanon. In such circumstances, more IDF troops would have to be deployed in the downsized zone, while the areas vacated would be taken over by Hizbullah, as happened when the SLA withdrew from two positions in Kafir Falus in the Jezzine enclave, despite assurances to the contrary from the Lebanese government.

He was also critical of the calls for strikes against Lebanese infrastructure in retaliation for fatal attacks on the IDF in the zone, or shelling of Galilee. This, he said, would only harm civilians who have no leverage over the Lebanese government or Syria, the real power-broker in Lebanon. "We could, in a subtle way, react by hitting Syria's economic interests in Lebanon because Syria actually encourages Hizbullah and facilitates the organization's activities. They can't facilitate Hizbullah's activities while remaining immune," said Sneh.

"Basically, however, we cannot detach the Lebanese problem from the Syrian context. Syria totally dominates Lebanon, and south Lebanon is the area where Syria is fighting us over the Golan Heights. If the Syrians want to stop Hizbullah's activities they have all the means to do so, as they did when they subdued all other opposition in Lebanon."

"The fundamental solution is to reach a comprehensive peace with Syria. When that is achieved, the Lebanese problem will be solved. A comprehensive peace with Syria would also help bring an end to Syria's alliance with Iran, which sponsors, finances, equips, directs and arms Hizbullah," he added.

The prospects of reaching a comprehensive agreement with Syria, however, do not appear to be on the horizon, even assuming that President Hafez Assad and whoever he eventually appoints as his successor are willing to accept the consequences of full peace with Israel.

In the meantime, therefore, the status quo in Lebanon is likely to remain in force with all its ramifications, including the potential for an escalation in the fighting.

When Oded Gera, the multi-talented president of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation, was still a fashion designer some years ago, he was known as much for his personal flair as for his creative styling. That flair is still one of his outstanding characteristics.

Gera, who boosted IPO ticket sales by promoting the concert hall to jeans-clad audiences, went in the opposite direction last week with a glittering London fund-raiser for the moneyed elite. Having lived in London, Gera knows everyone who is anyone - and he pulled off a marvelous coup by arranging for the IPO, under the baton of Zubin Mehta, to give a Mozart concert at Buckingham Palace, after which guests were hosted to dinner by the Duke of Edinburgh. Each cheerfully paid out \$5,000 for the privilege.

For those who were also interested in accommodation at the legendary Claridges hotel and a tour of the post fire-ravaged, spruced-up Windsor Castle, the cost per person was \$7,500.

Music lovers from Israel who ascended the red-carpeted staircase at Buckingham Palace included Professor Michael Sela and his wife, Sara, Leon and Irith Koffler, Feige and Rubin Zimmerman, Raya Jaglom and Ilana Ben Ami. Also there were Yossi and Chava Hackmey, Jeshayahu and Shoshana Shaked, Tova and Sami Sagol, Michael Strauss, and Yossi and Julie Harel. Other guests included Charles and Andrea Broadman from Canada, Mort Zuckerman from the US, and Bruce and Ruth Rappaport from Switzerland. Ruth and Sammy Cohen came from Brazil, along with Lily Safra, who was wearing two pairs of 30-carat diamond earrings. Alice Lobel arrived from Paris, Simone Gutman from Brussels, and the Duchess of Abercorn from England. Shmuna Lawson, an Israeli expatriate living in London, also attended, as did British philanthropist Mania Leigh.

THE Zimmermans, who are also dance lovers, came home in time for a special performance by The Israel Ballet in memory of Evelyn Pearl, a great ballet enthusiast, who died last year in Montreal. Pearl, Feige Zimmerman's sister, was a frequent visitor to Israel, even when she was critically ill. During each of her visits here, she made it her business to attend Israel Ballet performances.

Her family and friends - Hannah Semer, who chairs the Israel Ballet's board of directors, Miriam Ben Haim, Doris Weiser Small and Batya Rekem - organized the memorial performance, whose proceeds went to establish a scholarship in Pearl's name. Pearl's husband, Reeviv, who flew in from Montreal with their son, Jonathan, said his wife would have been extremely proud and grateful to know that a fund aiming to improve Israel's cultural life had been established in her memory. "Forever in the future, some young person will benefit," he observed.

Among those attending were Esther Rubin, the ever-youthful Rachel Dayna, Vivian Dinitz, Dorit and Ron Benatov, who are moving back to Israel from Milan, Elise Einhorn, Rofy Ben Ya'acov and 20th-generation Jerusalemis.

Ruth Kaplan. Also present was Pearl's daughter, Ilana, a doctor at Schneider Children's Hospital. Recalling that her mother liked to write poems for all occasions, she said she had written one of her own in memory of her mother, and read it. There wasn't a dry eye in the house.

GREATER Israel advocates who came to the annual Purim Masquerade Banquet hosted at the Crown Plaza Jerusalem by Women in Green did not expect to be at a sheva brachot. But since two of the guests, Rachel Temkin and Barak Mor, had only two days earlier celebrated their wedding, their friends Chantal and Marc Belzberg thought it would be appropriate to have the seven blessings recited for them.

The bride's former boss, Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert, who had attended the wedding, stopped by briefly to greet the Women in Green and their spouses and commend them for what they were doing to keep Jerusalem united. In particular, he singled out Nadia Matar, who co-founded the group with her mother-in-law, Ruth Matar. Taking Nadia Matar's youngest infant in his arms, Olmert noted the frequency with which "she is producing the next generation to fight for Jerusalem."

Amongst those reciting the blessings for the newlyweds were Moledei MKs Rehavam Ze'evi and Rahmi Benny Elon. Ze'evi, who in his army days earned the nickname of Gandhi for dressing up in a white Indian-style robe, wore one again - this time embellished with a map of Greater Israel bearing the slogan: "You can't divide me."

WHEN Michelle Mazel, the wife of Israel's ambassador to Egypt, tried to instruct her new chef, Ibrahim Ali Fahmi, in the intricacies of kashrut, she succeeded in getting him to understand that he couldn't use butter together with meat - but why he couldn't use dairy products for the dossen was beyond his comprehension. After all, he reasoned, the dessert was being prepared separately.

As if this was not headache enough, Mazel, already planning for Pessah, wondered if Fahmi could be trusted to produce a traditional Seder menu. Fortunately, the Mazels have some *protektzia*. Their elder daughter, Iris, is the marketing and sales manager for the Princess Hotel in Israel, and through Zeev Goldstein, general manager of the Princess in Eilat, she was able to secure a one-week crash course for Fahmi under the direction of executive chef Itzik Rand.

But even if Fahmi gets it all right, Mazel has another problem. As the hostess of the largest Seder in Cairo, she has a mix of Sephardi and Ashkenazi guests - and the Sephardim, who happen to be in the majority, are asking for rice, which is taboo for Ashkenazim on Pessah.

AT the gala dinner at the Tel Aviv Hilton to mark the inauguration of the Israel Pen Lovers Club, Hilton Executive Chef Avigdor Bruch served up not only the fine fare which has earned him an international reputation, but also part of the Pen collection.

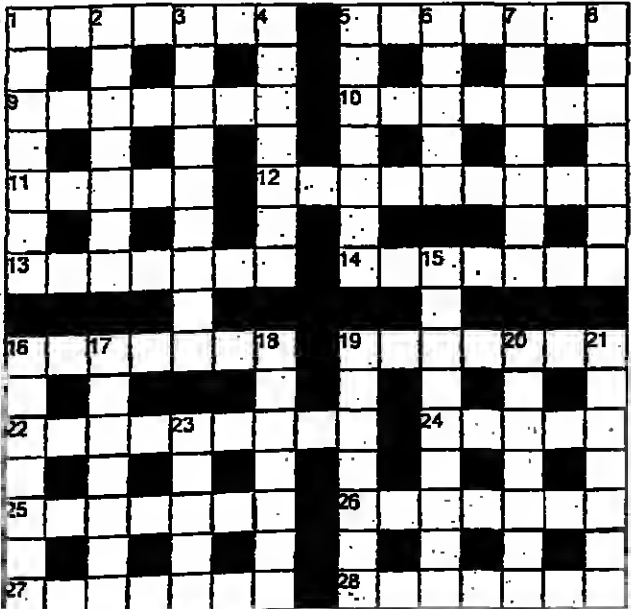
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 I'm a bank that returns folded sheets, Japanese (7)
- 5 Start to sugar small number - of coffees or teas? (7)
- 9 Where archbishops' leader in photos are found? (7)
- 10 Kicks out of disco once has come around (7)
- 11 What's starting a gory great rumour, OK... (5)
- 12 ...putting an end to a round kind of fray? (9)
- 13 Rulers whose wives may seem frilly I'd say? (7)
- 14 Yearned badly for house where clergy can stay (7)
- 16 One who painted what we'd call his old Dutch? (7)
- 19 At corners round river they catch so much! (7)
- 22 Mostly pasta I get cooked with last bit of dough (9)

DOWN

- 24 Speed of a regular gopak? Not so! (5)
- 25 Set well, famous batsman gets 10 going round (7)
- 26 One has most of the sick where workers are found (3-4)
- 27 Later returns about taxmen's withdrawal (7)
- 28 Under bad editor had a long haul (7)
- 1 Hurra for about children whose parents are dead (7)
- 2 Outside of the law, wicked bird so it's said (7)
- 3 Exorbitant charge on a mooring like this (9)
- 4 Decidedly states isn't mad about sis (7)
- 6 So get a bit flushed be-



SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Wight, 4 Whine, 10 Colonus, 11 Upper, 12 About, 13 Epistle, 15 Army, 17 Unite, 19 Rural, 22 Even, 23 Provide, 27 Grebe, 28 Chorus, 31 Seal, 32 State, DOWN: 2 Ligon, 3 Habitat, 6 Hour, 6 Naphtha, 7 Scrap, 8 Oiler, 9 Friend, 14 Pyre, 16 Weed, 18 Noctuid, 20 Unguent, 21 Speck, 23 Vesta, 24 Messy, 25 Inpet, 26 Relat.

QUICK CROSSWORD

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Outlawed (6) | 1 Breed of bound (6) |
| 2 German songs (6) | 2 Midday (4) |
| 3 Impotent (9) | 3 Cheerless (6) |
| 4 Rotate (4) | 4 Nabokov's nymphet (6) |
| 10 Italian island (4) | 5 Naturalness (4) |
| 11 Hackneyed (5) | 6 Discount (6) |
| 13 Loudspeaker system (6) | 7 Alfresco diner (9) |
| 14 Assert (6) | 8 Insomniac (9) |
| 16 Bring a charge against (6) | 11 Trunk (5) |
| 17 Furlined (6) | 12 Select group (5) |
| 19 Light weight (5) | 15 Polar region (6) |
| 20 Musical note (4) | 16 Castrato (6) |
| 23 Requests (4) | 17 Slightly crazy (6) |
| 24 Refutations (9) | 18 Former Egyptian president (6) |
| 25 Place of worship (6) | 21 Apprehension (4) |
| 26 Arafat (6) | 22 Mountain range (4) |

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Le Saux elbows prejudice into the open

By MICHAEL STEEN

LONDON (Reuters) - It has taken a sharp elbow to the head to wake English soccer to the fact that it has a problem - not with violence but in coming to terms with homosexuality and those who just want to be different.

When Chelsea's Graeme Le Saux, who has been subjected to persistent homophobic taunting by a fan with a well-documented poor disciplinary record.

But within a matter of hours the incident had led to widespread soul-searching amid accusations of homophobia in a national sport struggling to demonstrate tolerance and sensitivity towards minorities.

The Guardian newspaper reported in a front-page article on Wednesday that Le Saux, who is not homosexual, had been subjected to persistent homophobic taunting by a fan with a well-documented poor disciplinary record.

Liverpool have refused to comment on the incident. During a decade in top-flight soccer, Le Saux has suffered chanting from fans, abuse from opponents and even had a fight with a team mate - all because of rumors of homosexuality.

During Saturday's 2-1 Chelsea win, Fowler was seen repeatedly gesturing at the crowd and when Le Saux prepared to take a free kick the Liverpool man turned his back and thrust out his backside. Le Saux complained to the referee and was booked for time-wasting. "He's never been humiliated like that before," a friend of the Chelsea defender was quoted as saying in the Guardian.

The fact that it came from an England colleague made it harder to accept. In a way he's glad that this incident is going to be investigated by the FA (Football Association), the friend, who was not named, continued.

"He wants to tell them his story, the abuse he's suffered. The FA have to tackle this problem. If a player was racially provoked there would be an outcry."

Le Saux seems to have apparently become a target for those feeling threatened by a player who fails to conform to the stereotypical "birds and the bees" image of the game.

Players may kiss and cuddle on the pitch after scoring goals but they remain rigorously red-blooded off it.

Le Saux, with his penchant for antique collecting and visiting museums, is from a different mold.

He does not stand out among a cosmopolitan Chelsea team, full of top foreign internationals but is certainly different from many of his compatriots.

"In English football, nothing sticks out like a player who challenges a social orthodoxy inherited by the professional game from its roots in the working class," commented Richard Williams in yesterday's Independent newspaper.

"Those who dare to be different are seldom forgotten, even after the memory of their deeds on the pitch has faded." Married and with a newborn daughter, the player has been the target for taunts, according to newspapers, because of a love for art galleries and books which has led to him being dubbed soccer's "Renaissance Man".

The irony is that it has taken an act of physical violence between two heterosexuals to unleash the debate.

"It's still very difficult to 'come out' in football because of the culture surrounding the game," Mark Watson, a spokesman for gay rights group Stonewall, told Reuters.

"The FA did a campaign to kick out racism and should do the same with homophobia." Professional footballers are either uniformly heterosexual or reluctant to discuss their sexuality.

Justin Fashanu, the only professional footballer in Britain to have "come out," hanged himself last year in the mistaken belief he was wanted by US police on sex charges.

Fashanu, who became Britain's first million pound black player when he moved to Nottingham Forest in 1980, saw his career founder after being open about his sexuality.

WINNING CARDS
Yesterday's Migal Hapayim daily chance drawing

J Q K Q
Q J K
J 9 K Q



Indiana Pacers' Antonio Davis (33) and Jalen Rose box in Washington Wizards' Mitch Richmond (2) who looks to pass the ball to a teammate in NBA action on Wednesday. The Pacers won 106-95.

Iverson overcomes flu, scores 24 points as 76ers batter Bulls



PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Allen Iverson, the league's leading scorer, scored 24 points despite battling the flu as the Philadelphia 76ers toyed with the Bulls in a 102-86 victory Wednesday night.

The Sixers have a six-game winning streak for the first time since 1991, also the last time they started 10-5.

Matt Geiger had 21 points, a season-high 13 rebounds and a career-high five steals. Point guard Eric Snow had 10 points and eight assists.

Dickey Simpkins led the Bulls with 21 points and eight rebounds, showing some of the frustration that has beset the defending champions when he mugged for the camera after a dunk late in the game.

Pacers 106, Wizards 95

A classic length-of-court play at the third-quarter buzzer started a 20-6 run, helping the visiting Pacers win for the seventh time in eight games.

The textbook play that gave the Pacers some momentum came with 1.4 seconds to go in the third. Sam Perkins threw to Antonio Davis at the Wizards' foul line. Davis made a nice touch pass to Travis Best, who hit a 3-pointer to get Indiana within 83-79.

Jalen Rose scored 11 of his 22 points in the final quarter.

The Wizards collapsed in the fourth period as they lost for the fifth time in six games. Washington made just six of 22 shots in the period.

Rod Strickland was ejected in the game's final minute for arguing with referee Bob Delaney. The Wizards have lost five straight at home.

Magic 93, Hornets 76

Nick Anderson scored 25 points and Orlando used a 20-6 run early in the third quarter to pull away from Charlotte.

Anderson was 8-for-13 from the field, including 6-for-10 on 3-point attempts. Isaac Austin added a season-high 20 points and eight rebounds, and Darrell Armstrong provided a spark off the bench with 10 points and eight assists.

Charlotte's Derrick Coleman finished with 24 points and 10 rebounds. Charlotte didn't help itself with 21 turnovers and 24 fouls.

Bucks 106, Warriors 78

Tyronne Hill broke out of his season-long shooting slump and Glenn Robinson continued his hot streak from the foul line.

Robinson, leading the NBA at a .964 shooting clip from the line, hit all eight free throws and scored 19 points. He has missed just one of 28 free throws this season.

Hill, shooting just 34 percent from the floor, scored 20 points on 7-of-11 shooting and sat out the fourth quarter, as did Robinson and Ray Allen (18 points). Hill set the tone for the night with 13 first-quarter points.

John Starks scored 16 for visiting Golden State, which shot just 33 percent from the floor.

Jazz 109, Grizzlies 86

Host Utah won its 19th straight home game as Karl Malone had 16 points and 10 rebounds. The Jazz are the only Western Conference team the Grizzlies have never beaten.

Malone has scored 308 points in Utah's 13 straight wins over Vancouver, more than any other player.

One night after a wrenching double-overtime loss at Portland, Utah improved the league's best record to 12-3 with a breezy win over the uninspired Grizzlies. The Jazz made a 19-2 run early and were ahead by double digits for all but one possession of the final 3 1/2 quarters.

Trail Blazers 97, Kings 93, OT

Brian Grant had six of his 20 points in overtime and added 18 rebounds for visiting Portland.

Arvydas Sabonis added 17 points and 13 rebounds and Isaiah Rider had 16 points for Portland. For the Kings, who lost for the sixth time in eight games, Chris Webber had 20 points and 14 rebounds.

Lakers 101, Suns 95

Kobe Bryant scored 23 of his 32 points in the second half and Dennis Rodman had 17 rebounds to remain unbeaten with the Lakers.

Winning their fifth in a row and beating the visiting Suns for the second time in three nights, the Lakers reeled off a 12-0 spurt in the fourth quarter.

Shaquille O'Neal finished with 27 points for Los Angeles.

Cliff Robinson scored 20 as a reserve for Phoenix, and Tom Glesne had 14 points and 12 rebounds.

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	12	4	.750	-
Miami	18	4	.818	0
Philadelphia	18	5	.783	1
New York	9	6	.600	2 1/2
Boston	7	7	.500	3 1/2
Washington	5	9	.357	4
New Jersey	3	11	.214	4 1/2

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	11	4	.733	-
Atlanta	8	5	.615	2
Detroit	9	6	.600	2
Albany	7	7	.500	3
Cleveland	6	7	.462	4
Toronto	4	9	.308	6
Chicago	4	12	.250	7 1/2
Charlotte	3	18	.143	8

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	12	3	.800	-
Minnesota	9	5	.643	2 1/2
Houston	8	7	.538	4
San Antonio	7	8	.467	5
Dallas	6	10	.375	6 1/2
Denver	5	10	.333	7
Vancouver	4	11	.267	8

	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	11	3	.786	-
Seattle	9	4	.692	1 1/2
L.A. Lakers	11	6	.647	1 1/2
Phoenix	8	7	.538	3 1/2
Sacramento	7	9	.438	5
Golden State	4	9	.308	8
L.A. Clippers	8	13	.385	10 1/2

Wednesday's games: Indiana 106, Washington 95; Philadelphia 102, Chicago 86; Orlando 93, Charlotte 78; Milwaukee 106, Golden State 78; Utah 109, Vancouver 86; Portland 97, Sacramento 93, OT; L.A. Lakers 101, Phoenix 85.

Oilers down Sabres 5-3

BUFFALO (AP) - Boris Mironov and Bill Guerin each scored twice as the Edmonton Oilers beat the Buffalo Sabres 5-3 Wednesday night to give goaltender Steve Passmore his first National Hockey League win.

Passmore, starting in place of starter Bob Essensa, made 29 saves. In his only two previous NHL starts Passmore lost to Anaheim 2-1 and tied Carolina.

Buffalo native Todd Marchant also scored for Edmonton, and Guerin's empty-netter capped the scoring. Michael Peca scored twice for Buffalo and Jason Woolley had a goal and an assist for the Sabres.

Hurricanes 2, Bruins 1

Martin Gelinas had a goal and an assist as the Carolina Hurricanes beat visiting Boston, snapping the Bruins' five-game unbeaten streak.

Boston came into the game 4-0-1 in its last five and in eighth place in the Eastern Conference playoff race, but couldn't manufacture much offense against the tight-checking Hurricanes.

The victory gave the Southeast Division-leading Hurricanes a four-game home unbeaten streak despite their continued struggles on the power play.

Canadiens 4, Penguins 4

Jaromir Jagr capped a four-point night with a third-period goal as host Pittsburgh tied the Montreal Canadiens in a game that saw the Penguins lose two of their best players to injuries in the first period.

Pittsburgh's nine-game home winning streak ended, two short of the franchise record set in 1991. The Penguins had won five consecutive overtime games before settling for their first tie since Dec. 4, 37 games ago.

Devils 5, Maple Leafs 2

Jason Arnott scored two third-period goals as the visiting New Jersey Devils overcame a two-goal deficit to beat the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Scott Niedermayer and Bob Carpenter scored in the final four minutes of the second period to erase a 2-0 Toronto lead.

Then in the opening minute of the third period, Arnott flicked a wrist shot past screened Toronto goalie Curtis Joseph to put the Devils ahead 3-2. Arnott's 55-foot blast from inside the blue line eluded Joseph midway through the third.

Sergei Berezin scored both goals for the Maple Leafs, who lost for the first time at the Air Canada Centre (2-1-1).

Panthers 7, Avalanche 5

In Sunrise, Florida, Peter Forsberg had three goals and three assists as the Colorado Avalanche exploded for seven goals in the final 22 minutes to stun the Florida Panthers.

Forsberg's unassisted goal with 1:31 left capped a four-goal outburst in the final five minutes as the Avalanche roared back from a 5-0 deficit that included Pavel Bure's second hat trick of the season.

Adam Deadmarsh, Chris Drury and Milan Hejduk also scored during the Avalanche's final flurry, in which they scored four goals on their final eight shots. Claude Lemieux also scored as Colorado remained unbeaten in its last 10 road games (8-0-2), even minutes with a bruised right hand and Martin Straka departed after scoring his 30th goal because of a bruised shoulder.

Sharks 4, Canucks 3

Backup goaltender Steve Shields made 28 saves and Stephane Mameau and Bill Houlder scored third-period goals to lead the San Jose Sharks over the slumping host Vancouver Canucks.

Joe Murphy and Patrick Marleau also scored against rookie goaltender Kevin Weekes. It was Weekes' first NHL appearance for the Canucks since being acquired from the

Florida Panthers in the Pavel Bure trade.

Defenseman Bryan McCabe, rookie Peter Schaefer and Markus Naslund scored for the Canucks, who have fallen out of the Western Conference playoff race while going 1-5-2 in their last eight games.

Mighty Ducks 2, Kings 1

Guy Hebert stopped 33 shots and won his fourth straight decision, leading the Anaheim Mighty Ducks over the visiting Los Angeles Kings.

Hebert beat the Kings for the fourth time in as many meetings this season as he allowed only a second-period goal by defenseman Rob Blake.

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Atlantic Division

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New Jersey	34	22	8	76	186	155
Philadelphia	30	18	13	73	180	141
Pittsburgh	32	20	8	72	191	167
N.Y. Rangers	25	28	8	58	171	172
N.Y. Islanders	19	36	7	45	145	187

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Ottawa	34	18	8	76	174	130
Toronto	34	22	5	73	196	181
Buffalo	28	21	12	68	166	137
Boston	24	25	16	62	158	144
Montreal	25	29	9	59	152	163

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	28	22	12	68	162	155
Florida	22	23	16	60	138	146
Washington	26	30	5	57	161	181
San Jose	12	42	5	31	125	222

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Detroit	31	25	6	68	183	150
St. Louis	28	24	18	62	170	152
Calgary	21	34	4	46	142	198
Chicago	17	37	8	42	136	194

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	31	23	8	70	173	155
Edmonton	25	28	9	59	173	162
Vancouver	17	39	10	52	156	176
Vancouver	19	34	9	47	151	193

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	38	11	18	86	173	118
Phoenix	30	21	18	70	151	139
Anaheim	28	27	9	65	164	151
San Jose	22	27	14	58	141	148
Los Angeles	23	34	5	51	141	164

Wednesday's games: Edmonton 5, Buffalo 3; Carolina 2, Boston 1; New Jersey 5, Toronto 2; Montreal 4, Pittsburgh 4; St. Louis 7, Florida 5; San Jose 4, Vancouver 3; Anaheim 2, Los Angeles 1.

Agassi rolls, Rafter folds in Scottsdale

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (Reuters) - Defending champion Andre Agassi rolled while two-time US Open titleholder Patrick Rafter folded in the second round of the \$350,000 Franklin Templeton Tennis Classic on Wednesday.

Third seed Agassi whipped Mariano Zabaleta of Argentina 6-2, 6-0 but 17-year-old Australian sensation Lleyton Hewitt upset his second-seeded countryman Rafter 7-6 (7-5) 6-1.

"It's always surprising when you beat anybody 6-2, 6-0," Agassi said after the 50-minute rout. "It doesn't happen that often but I did everything I needed to do tonight."

Hewitt, who played his way into the main draw as a qualifier, beat Rafter for the second time in as many meetings after posting an identical result at Adelaide in January.

"I suppose the big thing is that Patrick is the two-time US Open champion. He's ranked to the top five and everyone expects him to beat the up-and-coming junior," said Hewitt.

All the pressure was on him to win. I'm ranked 90th in the world. I had nothing to lose."

"Lleyton has a good game and doesn't make many mistakes," Rafter said. "He's playing better than what's he's ranked."

Hewitt earned a quarter-final berth against Jerome Golmard, one of two Frenchmen to gain the final eight. Golmard trailed 3-5 when Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti retired with a sprained left ankle.

Cedric Pioline of France routed Australian Andrew Ilie 6-1 6-2 to set up a quarter-final pairing with Agassi.

World No. 1 Pete Sampras was to face Jan-Michael Gambill late last night in second-round action.

SPORTS

in brief

Betar Jerusalem slated to host Liverpool

Liverpool, one of England's top premiership sides, are scheduled to play against Betar Jerusalem on March 17.

The Liverpoolians, who have a few days off, will spend their time in Israel carrying out some warm-weather training.

The match at Teddy Stadium will be to mark the retirement of Eli Ohana.

International soccer agent Pini Zehavi told The Jerusalem Post yesterday that he had organized the break at the request of Liverpool coach Gerard Houllier.

Betar Jerusalem star Ohana, 35, will hang up his boots for good at the end of the season and will take over the reins from Dror Kashtan as Betar manager.

The IFA must still give final approval for the match to go ahead and financial terms need to be agreed between the clubs before the final go-ahead.

Offer Ronen-Abels

Wimbledon boss 'comfortable' in hospital

LONDON (Reuters) - Wimbledon manager Joe Kinnear was in a "comfortable condition" in hospital yesterday after suffering chest pains before Wednesday's English premier league match against Sheffield Wednesday.

Kinnear, 52, was taken to a hospital in Sheffield after feeling ill before the game. Wimbledon owner Sam Hammam was quoted as saying Kinnear had suffered a heart attack.

"He appears comfortable," a hospital spokesman said. "He is being monitored in the coronary care unit and will undergo further tests." Wimbledon won the match 2-1.

Other results on Wednesday night: Division One: Barnsley 0, Bradford 1; Queens Park Rangers 1, Oxford United 0; Swindon 2, Tranmere 3.

Scottish Cup: Clydebank 2, Dundee United 2.

United 9-4 favorites to win European Cup

LONDON (Reuters) - Manchester United are favorites to win the European Cup following the first leg of the quarter-finals, London bookmakers William Hill said yesterday.

Odds: 9-4 Manchester United 3-1, Juventus 10-3, Bayern Munich 11-2, Dynamo Kiev 8-1, Real Madrid 12-1, Inter Milan 25-1, Olympiakos Piraeus 66-1, Kaiserslautern.

Gascoigne fined and suspended

LONDON (Reuters) - Middlesbrough midfielder Paul Gascoigne was fined £2,000 by the English Football Association yesterday and suspended for one match for reaching 11 bookings this season.

The former England international will now miss his team's premier league game against Chelsea next Wednesday.

England's Yates banned again for 'reckless' play

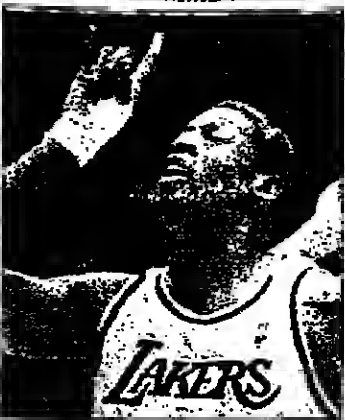
LONDON (Reuters) - England prop Kevin Yates, banned for six months last year for allegedly biting an opponent's ear, has been suspended again for "reckless" play.

The English Rugby Union (RFU) said yesterday that Yates had been banned for the rest of the month after the Bath player was cited by Wasps for alleged "illegal use of the boot" during a club match last month.

The decision was taken by an RFU disciplinary panel. "The panel found that Kevin Yates had not wilfully stamped on a player in the Wasps v Bath match of February 7 but had been reckless," the RFU said.

Yates was suspended last year after an incident in a club match which left London Scottish player Simon Fenn requiring 25 stitches in his ear.

NBA roundup



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Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori LewisBritish MP:
IOC will
violate charter
if queen
doesn't open
Olympics

LONDON (AP) — A British member of Parliament said yesterday the International Olympic Committee would violate its own charter if Queen Elizabeth II doesn't open the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

As the head of state of Australia and some other Commonwealth nations — as well as Britain — the queen would normally open the games. But Australian cabinet members have supported Prime Minister John Howard's position that the prime minister, and not the queen, should have that role.

Gerald Kaufman, head of a parliamentary committee on sports and culture, said yesterday the Olympic Charter specified the head of state — not head of government — should have the honor.

"There is absolutely no way that the prime minister is the head of state of anywhere, including Australia," Kaufman said.

"So why is the IOC allowing the charter to be violated by Mr. Howard being permitted to open the games?"

British IOC member Craig Reddie suggested the IOC was flexible and that it was seeking "an opinion from the government of Australia."

"It's an issue I must raise with my colleagues in Lausanne," the Swiss city where the IOC is based, Reddie added.

Kaufman was not satisfied. "The Australian cabinet has decided Mr. Howard should open the games. The IOC is said to be relaxed about this," Kaufman said. "How can it be relaxed about the violation of the charter?"

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said no decision had been reached on the queen's role.

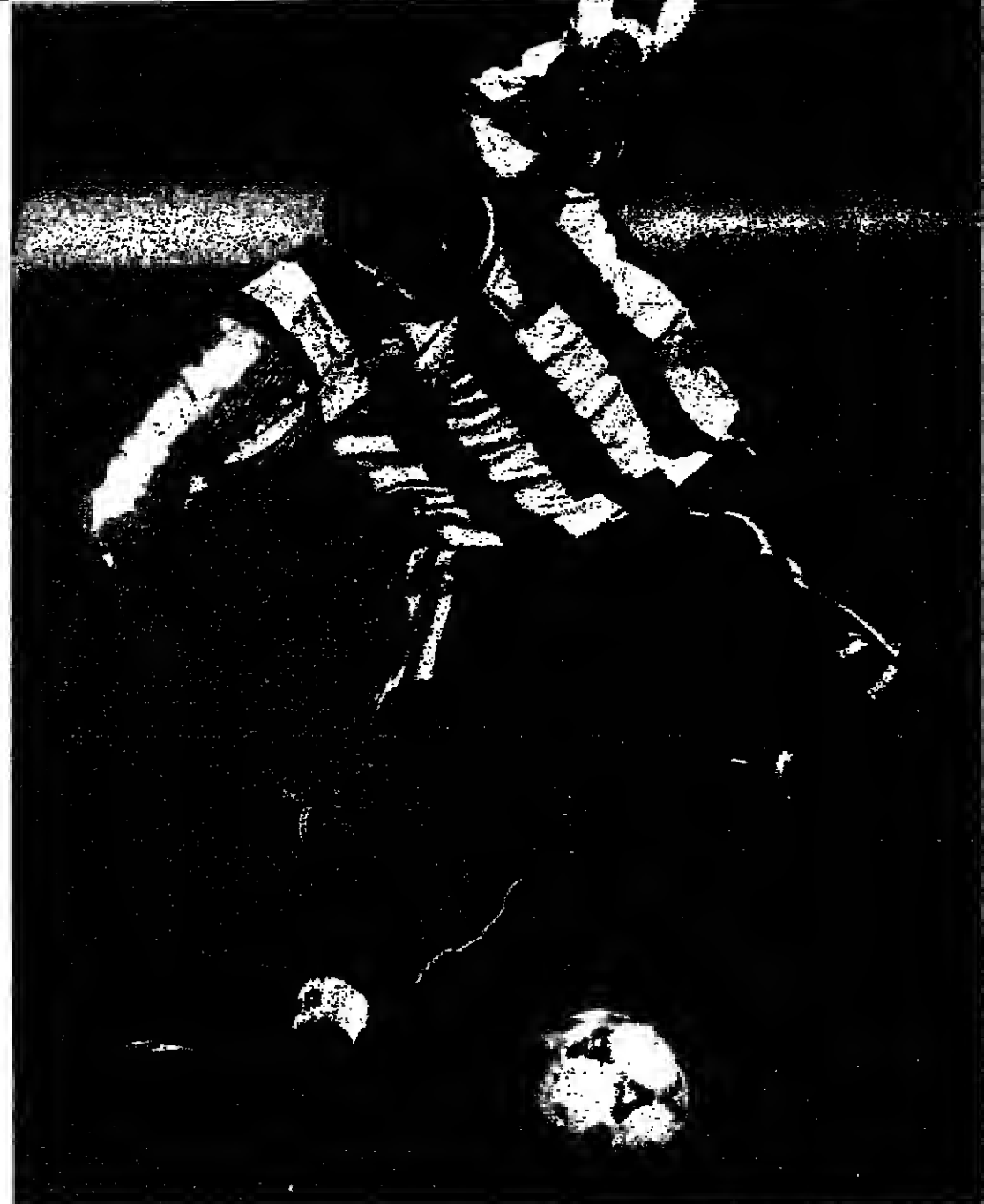
The problem could be eliminated on November 6 when Australians vote whether to keep the queen as head of state or install an Australian president.

Dismal night for Mac Tel Aviv, Mac Haifa

TA ousted from EuroLeague; Haifa beaten 3-0 by Spartak Moscow in Cup Winners Cup



Kinder Bologna's Antoine Rigaudeau goes up for a shot over Maccabi Tel Aviv's David Benoit at Yad Eliahu last night.



Spartak Moscow's Georgian international, Zaza Dzhambashia, who scored all three goals for his side against Maccabi Haifa in the Russian capital last night, jumps over Avishai Janno.

No Kinder surprise for Maccabi

By BRIAN FREEMAN

Defending European champions Kinder Bologna ousted Maccabi Tel Aviv from the EuroLeague last night, defeating the Israelis 70-55 in convincing fashion at Yad Eliahu to sweep the Final 16 series.

It was the third straight season in which Maccabi bowed out of the EuroLeague at this stage, but — unlike against Efes Pilsen in 1997 and Teamsystem Bologna last year — it was the first in which the Israelis were so thoroughly outplayed.

Kinder advances to the best-of-three quarterfinals against the winner of the Olimpija Ljubljana-Pau-Orthez series (Orthez evened that series with a 74-57 home win) in its attempt to become the first club to repeat as champions since Split won its third consecutive title in 1991.

Five other teams swept their series last night — Real Madrid over visiting Fenerbahce 85-74; Zalgiris Kaunas over Ulker 93-82 in Istanbul; Efes Pilsen in triple overtime over hosts CSKA Moscow 105-98; Olympiakos over hosts Varese 83-77; and Teamsystem Bologna in a shocker over Panathinaikos, which went 15-1 during final pool play.

Cibona Zagreb evened its series with a 79-68 win over visiting Villeurbanne 79-68.

Kinder used the same method to defeat Maccabi as it did in routing Tel Aviv 78-57 at Bologna in Game 1, utilizing its stifling defense for the entire contest and executing its offense as it is drawn up in the play-book.

Kinder has now won nine straight contests over Maccabi, dating back to 1985, including all four games at Yad Eliahu this decade.

Maccabi opened the contest by taking its first lead of the series when Doron Sheffer drilled the opening shot of the night for a 3-0 advantage, which turned out to be his only points on the night.

Tel Aviv led for the last time at 13-12, seven minutes into the game before Bologna went on a 25-13 run to close out the half with a 37-26 advantage.

Unlike in Game 1, when Maccabi never had a chance in the second period, the Israelis came out of the locker room playing their best basketball of the series, going on a 9-2 run to cut Kinder's advantage to only 38-35 with 17:51 remaining.

But at that point, Kinder showed that championship teams do not panic when the tide starts to turn.

After calling a timeout, Bologna took just over a minute to boost the margin back up to 11 when both Pedrag Danilovic and Alessandro Abbio hit their first three pointers of the contest.

the contest and Radoslav Nesterovic scored a bucket.

This took the wind out of the sails of Maccabi and the capacity crowd, and Tel Aviv was not able to get any closer than eight the rest of the evening.

The most frustrating part of the second half came midway through the period when Maccabi went on a six-point run to close the gap to nine and could have cut it to seven when a court-long pass found Constantin Popa open under the basket, but he missed the layup.

Bologna then swept aside Maccabi's last chance by scoring five straight points to put the game out of reach at 59-54 with just under seven minutes to play.

For Maccabi, which shot just 35.7% from the field after hitting only 39.6% on Tuesday in Bologna, Oded Katash was the leading scorer with 23 points, followed by Victor Alexander with 17, David Benoit had 7, Sheffer and Nadav Henefeld 3 each and Guy Goodes 2.

Kinder was paced by Nesterovic with 19 points, 11 rebounds and excellent defense, while Antoine Rigaudeau had another brilliant performance with 18 points and 5 assists. Danilovic had 13, Alessandro Frosini 10, Alessandro Abbio 6 and Claudio Crippa and Daniel O'Sullivan 2 each.

The loss for Maccabi ended the club's six-game home European winning streak, and illustrated once again how ineffective Tel Aviv has been this season against the quality clubs, even at home.

The consecutive home losses to start the season against Panathinaikos and Efes Pilsen set the stage for Maccabi failing to earn home-court advantage or an easier opponent in the Final 16.

Haifa will require a miracle

By OFER ROMAN-ABELS

Maccabi Haifa were beaten 3-0 by Lokomotiv Moscow in the first leg of the European Cup Winners Cup quarter finals in a freezing Russian capital last night.

Georgian international striker Zaza Dzhambashia scored a hat trick which made the Russians favorites to reach the semi-finals.

The first half ended goalless even though the home side had most of the chances. Haifa's only opportunity came on the stroke of half time but Ronen Harazi's pass to Yossi Benayoun was not accurate enough.

Haifa came out of the tunnel for the second half with all guns blazing but Jerzy Brzezczek's left-foot shot was saved by Ruslan Nigmatullin.

In the 47th minute, Lokomotiv took the lead with a bizarre goal which will haunt Haifa's goalkeeper Nir Davidovich for the rest of his career.

Israel's first-choice 'keeper failed to hold onto a long-distance shot by Dzhambashia from 40 meters out. He fumbled the ball which then slipped between his fingers and into the net.

As soon as Lokomotiv scored, the Haifaites looked lost and Davidovich almost conceded a second seven minutes later, Dimityr Loskov's shot was parried by Davidovich which then slipped to save from Dimityr Bulykin at the second attempt. Ibrahim Duro replaced Radovan Hromatko as Haifa coach Dusan Uhrin tried to change the course of the match. Duro almost rewarded his manager as he combined well with Benayoun to release Ronen Harazi, but his left-foot shot couldn't beat Nigmatullin.

Harazi was later booked for dissent after Slovak referee Miroslav Lubos turned down his penalty appeals. He was replaced minutes later by Victor Pacha.

Only seconds after the substitution, with 12 minutes to go, Dzhambashia doubled his team's lead. Loskov's cross beat Adoram Keisi and was chested down by Dzhambashia before shooting in from close range.

Davidovich then showed signs of the composed display he gave in the first half with an instinctive save to a fierce shot by Loskov, but the damage had been done.

With five minutes left on the clock, Uhrin gambled and replaced Yossi Benayoun, who failed to rise to the occasion, with Haim Silvas, as Haifa's chances of scoring a crucial away goal were slipping away.

A minute before the referee blew the final whistle, Dzhambashia completed his hat trick by punishing Maccabi's exhausted defense for another mistake.

Bulykin stole the ball from Alon Harazi before breaking into the box and crossing to Dzhambashia, whose shot was saved by Davidovich. However, again he failed to hold onto the ball and the Georgian tucked in the rebound.

Haifa will need nothing short of a miracle in the second leg in two weeks at Kiryat Eliezer. They will need to score four goals and cannot afford to concede if they want to stay in the competition.

Uhrin said later: "We lost the game in the second half, but we did not collapse. We made mistakes and were punished in the second period."

Uhrin kept a positive outlook for the return leg, however. "Everything is still possible," he said.

Chelsea 3, Valerenga 0

First half goals from Celestine Babayaro and Gianfranco Zola and a

third six minutes from time from Dennis Wise gave holders Chelsea a comfortable 3-0 cushion in the first leg against Norway's Valerenga at Stamford Bridge.

Slipping through the left flank of Egil Olsen's massed Valerenga defenders, Babayaro cracked a Zola pass inside keeper Mikko Kiven's near post in the ninth minute to open the scoring.

Zola finished the job himself in the 30th minute from a Babayaro through-ball which he turned round a defender before sliding it into the net.

Wise completed a clinical finish in the 84th minute from a pass by Norwegian Tore Andre Flo who came on for Zola at halftime.

Valerenga, playing a long ball game with tall striker John Carew alone up front, had few chances and looked most dangerous from high balls and set pieces.

Panionios 0, Lazio 4

In Athens, Lazio underlined their European credentials with a 4-0 away win at Panionios.

The Italians netted in their first attack after just three minutes with a shot from seven meters by Dejan Stankovic.

Lazio, UEFA Cup finalists last season, made it 2-0 in the 14th when Chilean Marcelo Salas' dashed towards the Greek box and his cross from the right was turned into his own net by defender Athanasios Gazis.

In the 60th minute Salas passed two defenders and his shot from 10 meters bounced off the goalkeeper. Stankovic, following up, grabbed his second for 3-0.

Three minutes later the triumph was complete when Salas brilliantly found unmarked Pavel Nedved who shot home from 10 meters.

Valerenga 0, Mallorca 0

In Zagreb, Croatia goalkeeper Marjan Mamic produced an outstanding display as Valerenga Valerenga held Spain's Real Mallorca to a goalless draw.

The technically superior Mallorca team still look favorites to secure a semifinal berth in the return leg, but could already have established a significant advantage for the heroics of Mamic.

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